

T H E
Leper, and the Leper's House,
C L E A N S E D:

BEING, AN
E X P O S I T I O N

Upon some part of the

XIVth Chapter of LEVITICUS;

The Mystery of which is Explained and Applied to the State and Condition of a Sinner's becoming a Saint.

W I T H
Profitable U S E S and A P P L I C A T I O N S.

A S A L S O,

What the Chapter may be applied to, as to the Cleansing or Destroying of any particular Church of CHRIST, in and under the Time of the Gospel.

Divided into Ten P A R T S.

Written for the Information of those which seldom concern themselves about the Types and Shadows of the Old Testament: Very useful for all People.

By **T H O M A S W O R D E N**,
Author of, *The Types Unveiled.*

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A N

Epistle to the Reader.

AS the least of the Works of God are adorable, because they are the Works of him who is infinitely Wise, Powerful, Just and Good, much more are the greater Works of God adorable and admirable: There are three great Works of God, presented to our Sense and Understanding, which invites us all, with David, to cry aloud, Many are thy Works, O Lord, and in Wisdom hast thou made them all: And these are, 1st, His Works of Creation, in making the World. 2dly, His Works of Providence in providing for the World, in sustaining, governing, and preserving of it. 3dly, In redeeming and eternally saving of his Elect in the World. In his Creating-work there is much of his Wisdom and Power manifested; in his Providential-work there is much of his Bounty and Goodness declared; and, in this Work of Redemption, how much of his Love, Grace, Mercy, and Bowels of Pity is there in this to be magnified? And unto all this has God added his written Book of Scripture, by the Inspiration of his own Spirit in the holy Prophets and Apostles, wherein he hath plainly opened, to our dark Understandings, both the Matter, Method, and the Means to obtain the End of it, which is Everlasting Life and Blessedness. And though this be plainly incerted in the Word of God, that sanctified Babes do arrive to the Knowledge of it, yet it is a Book sealed up from the Unsanctified, Wise, and Learned in the World, that they understand nothing of the saving Mystery and Meaning of it; those which have not the Key of Grace to unlock it, shall never discover the Riddles of it, as to be able to say, by experience, Out of this Eater comes Meat, and out of this strong One comes Sweetness; but though there is nothing obscure in the Scripture, yet what the meanest Child of God may understand, as necessary to his Salvation, yet there are many things in it which cannot

An Epistle to the Reader.

be still ignorant of, as a hindrance to their growth in Knowledge, to the furtherance of their Consolation; and these difficult things, not easily to be understood, consists much, if not mostly, of the dark Types of the Old Testament: The difficulty of them makes many a Christian to throw by the reading of the two Books, (viz.) Exodus and Leviticus, as wholly useleſs in their Esteem, which was one considerable Reason which put me upon that Task of bringing forth my Book, call'd, The Types Unvail'd, above Thirty Years ago, it was to encline the ignorant sort of Christians to a greater Freedom, to make themselves more familiar with these Old Testament-Mysteries, in which (as so many Pearls hid in a heap of Earth) the Substance of the whole Gospel is included; and the same Design I have in being willing to let go this Exposition to publick View, the Piece having lain by me in secret for some Years, not knowing that ever it might be of any farther Use than to benefit my own Children; but, God, which orders all Events by his Providence, it seems, was resolved that this Work of mine, (though but a Mite prepared for his Treasury) yet it should not be buried in Oblivion, but did order it to be so, (though unknown to me) did cast a Servant of his into a Family, unto which I had lent the Manuscript to read for their private Instruction, it pleas'd God to order it so, that the People of the House should give their Friend a sight of the Copy; and when he had read part of it, it begat a thorow Resolution in his Mind, not to rest until he had been at the Press with it; and though it be void of Letters of Attestation, yet it hath past under several good Ministers Approbation: So, commending the whole Work to the Blessing of God, with thy Soul in the reading of it, which if it prove a Means of the increase of thy Faith in God, thy Knowledge of God, and Love to God, give the whole Honour to him from whom I received this Light, as indeed they must who are mostly acquainted with the Original of my Education, and give me thy Prayers, (not thy Praises) that God would make my Preaching-labours, as well as my Writing-labours, very profitable to the Souls of those I labour in the Ministry amongst: And so, crave leave to write my self the meanest of Ministers, and yet Christ's and the Churches Servant,

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T H E

Leper, and the Leper's House,
C L E A N S E D.

EXPOSITION I.

AN Exposition upon some part of the Fourteenth Chapter of Leviticus, entituled, The Leper Cleansed : The Mystery of which, is explained and applied to the State and Condition of a Sinner's becoming a Saint, which is seconded with some profitable Uses and Application : As also what the Chapter may be applied to, the Cleansing or Destroying of any particular Church of Christ, in and under the time of the Gospel. Written for the Information of those which seldom concern themselves about the Types and Shadows of the Old Testament.

IN which Chapter you have these two Generals insisted upon ; First, The Subject. (1st. What is spoken of the Subject.) First, You have the Subject itself, and that is twofold : First, The Man. Secondly, His House.

Secondly, You have what is spoken of the Subject, namely, The Man and his House, and that is twofold : First, The Disease which hapned to either. Secondly, The Remedy prescribed to both : I shall first speak of the Man, beginning with him, and in the second place speak of his House, which is the other part of the Subject to be treated of : And here, First, with respect to the Man, we may observe these two things : First, His Disease, and that was a Leprosie. Ver. 2. *This shall be the Law of the Leper, in the Day of his Cleansing.* The Mystery of which, is to lead us into the Knowledge of that spiritual Leprosie, which, by o-
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original Sin, is begotten in our whole Man, a Disease derived from Father to Son, a Disease which hath spread itself over the face of the Earth, leaving neither Man, Woman, or Child untouch'd with the Venom of it, saith *1 John* 5. 19. *The whole World lieth in Wickedness.* This spiritual Leprosie is a Disease, that no Man in the World can possibly escape; this taketh hold of the highest King upon the Throne, as well as the Beggar upon the Dunghil. I do not say, That every Man is a Leper in a corporal Sense, no, but yet the Anti-type of that corporal Leprosie, which the Jews were so subject unto, which shadowed forth this spiritual Leprosie which I am speaking of, (which is a thousand times more destructive than the former :) This is a Leprosie which cleaves to every Man in the World, and as it cleaves to every Man, so it cleaves to every Part in Man; it is a Corruption and Disorder so universal, that the whole Soul is bound under it, without any supply of its own to rescue itself, because the whole Faculties of the Soul are corrupted with this unclean leprous Pollution; therefore it is called, *The Dominion of Sin*, *Rom.* 6. 12. *A Body of Death*, *Rom.* 7. 24. and a Law of Sin bringing the Soul into Captivity, *Rom.* 7. 23. For first of all, this Leprosie darkens the Understanding, *Ephes.* 4. 18. *Having the Understanding darkned, being alienated from the Life of God, through the Ignorance which is in them, because of the Blindness of their Heart:* And from hence the Imaginations of the Heart become Vain, *Rom.* 1. 21. and not only Vain, but continually Evil, *Gen.* 6. 5. pursuing unprofitable Curiosities, *Acts* 19. 19. and impertinent Questions, *Titus* 3. 9. vain Deceit, *Col.* 2. 8. it wants a Capacity to discern things of the greatest Concernment, *1 Cor.* 2. 14. so that the best Habits of the Understanding are corrupted by this leprous Disease; the Wisdom of the World is not only Foolishness, *1 Cor.* 3. 19. but Enmity against God, yea, earthly, sensual, and devilish, *James* 3. 15. These, and the like, doth this spiritual Leprosie produce in the Understanding: the Light being either quite out or dim, the Actings of the Understanding become irregular; and it is one of the great Works of Christ in our Regeneration, to give us the Spirit of Power and a sound Mind, *2 Tim.* 1. 7.

1st, So for the Will, this Leprosie hath as much perverted

ted that, as it hath darkened the Underſtanding, and that upon a double account: Firſt, By reaſon of that Corruption which is in the Underſtanding; for the Proſecution or Ayerſation of the Will, is much qualified and ruled, according to the Light that is in the Underſtanding; and if that Light be Darkneſs, then there muſt neceſſarily follow a great miſcarriage in the Will.

2dly, By reaſon of that Captivity that the Will lieth under to the Law of Sin and the Fleſh, God gave to Man a righteous Law, which was to be a Law and Rule to his Mind, planted in him to direct and guide him in all things answerable to the revealed Will of God; but by reaſon of this Leproſie's corrupting the Will, it is now not ſubject to the Law of God, neither indeed can it be, *Rom. 8. 7.* nay, the Will is ſo much maſtered and preſſed down, by being poſſeſſed of this Leproſie, through this powerful Law of Sin which it ſifts into the Soul; inſomuch when it meets with the Law of God coming into the Heart, it takes an occaſion thereby to work in the Soul all manner of Concupiſcence, *Rom. 7. 6.* and all this, meerly out of Malice and Policy, to make the Law of God (which ſhould reſtrain the Soul from Sin, and reſcue the Soul) more odious to the Soul, and the Soul to it; as Conquerors uſe to do, who introduce Laws, Cuſtoms, and Languages of their own, the more to eſtrange the Conquered from any Memory of their former Duty and Freedoms; but now, when Chriſt comes into the Soul, he reſcues the Soul from the Dominion (though not from the being) of Sin: *Rom. 6. 14. Sin ſhall not have Dominion over you; for ye are not under the Law, but under Grace.*

3dly, This Leproſie hath not only darkned our Underſtandings, and corrupted our Wills, but it hath poiſoned our Affections alſo: The great and Maſter-piece of our Affections is Love, and the prime Object of it is God; and in our original Creation our Love was rightly placed upon God, the only Diſcerner of our Love; and when our Love was rightly qualified, it was moſt intenſe Love, according to the Law and Command of God, *Deut. 6. 5. Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy Heart, with all thy Soul, and with all thy Might:* But now this Leproſie, though we have loſt the proper Object of this Affection, yet not the Affection itſelf, but in as much as our Love hath loſt its Guide; hence it is, that it wanders

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after something else, like *Noah's Dove*, seeking rest amongst the Creatures, and Pleasures of the Flesh, but findeth none, and at last takes up in ourselves, making them the sole Objects of our Love and Affection; so that as our Love is misplaced with respect to its Object, so it mistakes in the pursuit of that Object; for no Man doth truly love himself, who doth not truly love God; because the true Effect of Love, is to do all the good we can to the Thing we Love. Now the chiefest Good to ourselves, lieth in our Conformity unto the Will of God, wherein indeed lieth the beauty, happiness, and blessedness of the Soul: Thus when a Man hath lost the true Object of his Love, no wonder he wanders up and down, in a Wilderness of Mistakes, and so at last makes himself the sole Object of his Affection. *Rom. 1. 25. Who hath changed the Truth of God into a Lie, and worshipped and served the Creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever, Amen.* So that, that Man, who terminates his Love upon himself, Serves and Worships himself: Thus the Order and Beauty which God at first planted in Man, it being corrupted and turned into so much Disorder in the Soul by this Leprosie, this makes that Confusion in all the other Affections and Passions of the Mind: But this is not all, But,

4thly, As *Paul* speaks to *Titus*, *Tit. 1. 15.* This Leprosie hath defiled the Consciences of Men, it hath first darkned the divine Light of God in the Soul, in a great measure, which hath much weakned the Evidence that Conscience should give in for God, and made it so much the more uncertain in its Testimony; so also hath it weakned it in its Power, that it stirs not as otherwise it would do, like a Man over-powered and benumbed with much heaviness to Sleep. Hence in some Men, 'tis said to be seared, as with a hot Iron; as seared Flesh is dead Flesh, so are the Consciences of some Men in their Breasts, dead, powerless, unable to act or speak. Therefore this spiritual Leprosie, is very lively shadowed out by the *Jewish* corporal Leprosie, for the over-spreading Nature of it; a corporal Leprosie runs over all the parts of the Body, so doth this sinful Leprosie as you have seen, it spreads itself over all the parts and powers of the Soul, leaving no part of it untainted: The same which the Prophet spake of the State of *Israel*,

the Leper's House, Cleanſed.

as a Body Politick, with reſpect to its Pollution by Sin, *Iſa.* 1. 6. *From the ſole of the Foot unto the Head, there is no ſoundneſs in it; but Wounds, and Bruiſes, and putrifying Sores; they have not been cloſed, neither bound up, neither mollified with Ointment.*

Thus having diſcovered the ſpiritual Leproſie, which cleaves to every Man by Nature, I ſhall next give you the Grounds and Reaſons of it.

Reason 1.] **F**Irſt of all, the Reaſon and Ground of this ſpiritual Leproſie, took its riſe from the Sin of *Adam*, upon a double account: Firſt, Naturally. Secondly, Morally. Firſt, Naturally, as we are the Off-ſpring of *Adam*, our firſt Father in the Fleſh; for we were virtually included in him, as a multiplicity of Seeds in the firſt Seed, and ſo reaſonably muſt partake of the ſame natural Quality which were in him: For if it be granted, that his Poſterity, deſcending from him by ordinary Generation, had partook of the Qualities of Righteouſneſs, Wiſdom, and Holineſs from him, had he not fallen, then, is it not as reaſonable to conclude, that we muſt neceſſarily partake of his Sin and Pollution (the Effects of his Fall) which faſtened upon him by his Tranſgreſſion? And that you may ſee the Atteſtation which the Spirit of God gives to this as a Truth, read *Gen.* 5. 3. *And Adam lived a hundred and thirty Years, and begat a Son in his own Likeneſs, after his Image.* Now for *Adam* to beget a Son after his own Image, (if we reſpect his external Form, and parts of his Body) this carried no ſuch note of Obſervation in it, for, who would expect that it would be otherwiſe? Becauſe ordinary it is not, unleſs the Birth be monſtrous; but the thing to be noted in the Text is this, That as *Adam*, by his Tranſgreſſion, became a poor, depraved, ſinful, leprous Creature himſelf, ſo his Child, which naturally ſprang from him, derived from him the ſame leprous Pollution, which *Adam* by his Fall, procured to himſelf, and unavoidably to every one elſe which ſhould ſucceed him: But then, Secondly, It is ſo upon a moral account; becauſe *Adam* and all his Poſterity were in Covenant with God together, and in that Covenant, both himſelf and all his Seed, made up (as it were) one

one entire Man in the Account of God. *Adam's* Person representing (under that Covenant) every Man, Woman, and Child, that ever did or should spring from him to the end of the World ; so that when he fell, we all fell in him ; and when he broke Covenant with his Creator, we then broke Covenant with him and in him, and consequently when the Penalty of Covenant-breach (which was the Curse and Death) fell upon him, it fell upon us in him at the same time. So reasons the Apostle, *Rom. 5. 17. For if by one Man's Offence, Death reigned by one.* So ver. 18. *Therefore as by the Offence of one, Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation.* So ver. 19. *For as by one Man's Disobedience many were made Sinners.* See ver 12. also. So that, upon this moral Account, as by *Adam's* Sin, we were made Guilty, so by the same Transgression, are we become leprouously Filthy, *Ezek. 16. 6. I saw thee polluted in thy Blood.* Hence saith our Saviour, *Matt. 15. 19. Out of the Heart proceed evil Thoughts, Murders, Adulteries, Fornications, Thefts, false Witness, Blasphemies.*

Reason 2.] Why this spiritual Leprosie is so unavoidable, it's because it is an Evil propagated from Father to Child, by a natural Generation ; it runs in a Line from one to another ; it is such an entailed Evil, as cannot be cut off by any thing that Man can do ; it is as impossible for Man not to beget a leprous sinful Substance, as it is for him not to beget a natural fleshly Substance, if his Loins be fruitful to beget any thing at all. It is the Order which God hath planted in Nature, that every Kind should bring forth his like : Therefore if a Man be an Instrument to produce any thing by Generation, it must be in his own Likeness ; for though Man originally was not unclean, (but as *Solomon* speaks, he was made Just and Upright) yet as the case now stands with Man, he being corrupted with this sinful Leprosie, he cannot beget his own Likeness unless he do naturally and instrumentally produce an ugly Leper like himself.

From hence we infer these two Uses :

1st Use, This informs us then of the Ground and Reason of that great Distance that there is betwixt God and Men, as the Apostle speaks, *Ephes. 2. 13. We are afar off from God ;* and as we are at a great distance from God,

so is he at as great a distance from us ; all which ariseth from the Impurity and Defilement of our Natures, upon the account of this Leprosie. God is a holy God, and we are sinful and unholy Creatures ; the Nature of God will not permit of any Fellowship with sinful Men, *He is of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity*, Hab. 1. 13. *neither can Evil dwell with him.* Isai. 50 2. *Your Iniquities have separated betwixt you and your God, and your Sins have hid his Face from you.* So 2 Cor. 6. 14. *What fellowship hath Righteousness with Unrighteousness, and what communion hath Light with Darkness.*

2d Use, Let it serve to teach us Humility. Alas ! What little cause have Lepers to be proud, or to harbour a high-minded frame of Spirit in the least degree ? What if they wear better Clothes than other Folk, and walk with their sweet perfuming Smells about them, yet according to the Law about Leprosie, *Levit. 13. 45.* they were to cry out (to every one they met) *Unclean, unclean.* *Uzziah*, though a King, and in his Royal Robes, yet when a Leprosie brake out upon him, he was driven out from his Throne to live in a separated House alone, from the Society of all other Men, *2 Chron. 26. 20, 21.* So that the best that can be said of Lepers, let them be never so Rich, Noble, or gorgeously Attired, richly Perfumed, yea though they are mounted upon the Throne, yet still there is a Leprosie cleaving to them, yea when they mount up their Heads at the highest, they are but Lepers. It may be that thy Gifts and Parts do exceed many of thy Equals, in going beyond them for Learning, and Knowledge, and Urterance ; yet for all this, remember that a Leprosie is upon thee, thou art but a knowing, learned, eloquent Leper at the best ; and thou hast always cause to rent thy Clothes, and to make thy Head bare, and to put a Covering upon thy Upper-lip, and to cry out, *Unclean, unclean,* according to *Levit. 13. 45.* *Isaiab* had as large a Portion of Gifts and Parts, as the Proudest of you all had or have to boast of, yet you may read, under all his highest Attainments, what a humbling Consideration this was to him, that he still had the remainders of his Leprosie upon him, *Isai. 6. 5.* *Then said I, Wo is me, for I am undone, because I am a Man of unclean Lips, and I dwell in the midst of a People of unclean*

clean Lips. And as this was Matter of Humiliation to that Prophet, so should it be to every one else; for if a corporal Leprosie be so debasing a thing, much more must a spiritual Leprosie be so, because the more spiritual an Evil is, the more vile and debasing: Oh! how Humble should the Thoughts of this make us, under our greatest Enjoyments and Attainments in this Life.

PART. II.

Thus having spoken to the Disease, we next come to speak of the Remedy against it.

ABout which we may note these three things: First, There was something to be done by the Leper himself, in order to his Cleansing. Secondly, You have the Person noted by whom the Cure was to be wrought. Thirdly, You have the Means noted also, which was to be used in order to the Cure of the Leper. First of all, we are to consider what was to be done by the Leper himself in order to his Cure, which hath two things in it: First, He was to go or be brought to the Priest, that his Disease might be discovered, and lookt into. Secondly, And if it proved to be the Leprosie, then was he to go out of the Camp, and be separated from the People.

First of all, He was to go or be brought to the Priest, that his Disease might be discovered and lookt into, in order to his Recovery: *Levit. 13. 2. When a Man which shall have in the Skin of his Flesh, a Swelling, or a Scab, or a white Spot in the Skin of his Flesh, if it be like the Plague of Leprosie, then shall he be brought to the Priest.* Now the Levitical Priest, who was to be the Instrument of this corporal Cure, was a Type of Jesus Christ, our Gospel High-Priest, who alone can heal the spiritual Leprosie of our polluted and defiled Natures; and indeed, one great part of the Apostle's Work, in his Epistle to the *Hebrews*, is to shew the Levitical Priesthood, typical of the Priest-hood of Christ, not only in the Work of offering Gifts and Sacrifices for the People; but also, in that compassionating Care that Christ should exercise over his Members, in healing and helping them under their Infirmities, *Heb. 5. 1, 2.* From whence we shall raise this Observation:

Doct.

Doct. *That if any have a desire, to be healed of their spiritual Leprosies and Soul-pollutions, they must come, or be brought to Jesus Christ.*

Where could the *Israelites* go, or unto whom could they repair for healing Help against their corporal Leprosies, but unto their Levitical Priests? Had they travelled through the whole World for a Cure, they could not imagin to obtain it from the Hands of any whom God had not appointed to administer it; but, God never appointed any, but their Priests to be the Instruments in this Work, and none but them; therefore, to neglect the Use of them, was to abide still under the power of their Leprosies: So in the case of our spiritual Leprosies, it is only Jesus Christ which God hath appointed to administer Health and Healing against it; it is he alone that is the anointed High-Priest, to deal with our Soul-pollution, in order to the removing of it: *Heb. 2. 17, 18. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his Brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High-Priest in things pertaining to God, to make Reconciliation for the Sins of the People. For in that himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to Succour them that are tempted. Acts 4. 12. Neither is there Salvation in any other; for there is no other Name under Heaven given amongst Men, whereby we must be saved. So that if we seek to this High-Priest for a Cure of our Soul-pollution, we need not doubt of healing Grace, to our effectual Recovery; because he is able to save them to the uttermost, which come unto God by him, Heb. 7. 25. Thus as Jesus Christ is our only High-Priest, appointed and anointed of God for Soul-cure, so it is our coming to him which gives us the Benefit in order to our Recovery; the reason is, because our coming to him is made the Condition of it, Matt. 11. 28. Come unto me all ye that Labour, and are heavy Laden, and I will give you Rest. Isai. 55. 1. Ho, every one that thirsteth, let him come to the Waters. He that is a Thirst, let him come, and he that will, let him come, and take of the Waters of Life freely, Rev. 22. 17. Thus you see, though Christ our High-Priest be every way qualified and appointed by his Father for our Healing, who hath said of Christ, I have laid help upon one that is Mighty; yet still it is our coming to Christ for help, which effects the Cure in us:*

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(Mark)

(Mark) the leprous Person was to be brought to the Priest, *Lev. 13. 45.* and thou must *be brought to Christ; or thou must endure thy Leprosie for ever*; and so I come to make some Application upon this particular Point.

Use, This informs then, whence it is, and why it is, that we have so many spiritual Lepers amongst us, so many Men and Women, who live in their Sins, walk after the Flesh, taking pleasure in Iniquity, fulfilling the Desire of their fleshly Minds, and are still wandring after the Course of this World, yielding up of themselves to the Government of the Prince of the power of the Air, the Spirit that works in the Hearts of the Children of Disobedience. The reason lieth here; they come not to the Priest for a Cure, they make no use of Jesus Christ for healing Grace; there is a deep *Fountain opened to the House of David, and to the Inhabitants of Jerusalem, for Sin, and Uncleanness, Zech. 13. 1.* but they will make no use of it; which Fountain being the free Grace of God, running forth through the Merit of Christ's Blood, publishing itself to our Souls by the preaching of the Word and Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, this Grace and freely profered Mercy, they neglect, slight, and contemn, which is the only ordinary Means of their Cleansing and Healing; now of these Christ-slighting and Grace-undervaluing Souls, there are two sorts: First, Those who wilfully refuse and slight the Means of their Cleansing, which is the Ministry of the Word; of such we read in *John 5. 40. They would not come to Christ that they might have Life*; that is as you read in *John 6. 66. They went back from Christ*, that is, they turned their Backs upon the Ministry of Christ, for 'tis said, they walked no more with him; and *Solomon* tells you, That such as *refuse Instruction despise their own Souls*, *Prov. 15. 32.* Thus, through the pride and haughtiness of their Hearts, they slight the Means that should cleanse them; many of them are so Self-conceited, that they think they know already as much as the ablest Minister of Christ can tell them, and are as ready to say, What can the best of them all say any more to them, than they have heard long ago? Neither for the future do they expect, that their longer waiting upon their Preaching, can be any addition to that measure of Knowledge, which by their Ministry they have attained unto already: Thus by their despising

spising of Instruction, they despise their own Souls, and discern it not. Might not the poor Cripple, who lay at the Pool of *Bethesda* thirty eight Years, have slighted his waiting upon that Means long within that time, upon the same account? For had he come off from the Pool, and in his coming off should have met with any one, which might have exhorted him to a return again, and to have waited a while longer upon that healing Pool, might not he have replied, Do not I know what the Pool of *Bethesda* is? Have I not seen the Waters of it, with the frequent Signs of the Angels troubling of them? Can any Man acquaint me with any Passage or Circumstance about that Pool, which I know not as well as themselves? And whatever others are pleased to say or affirm about the healing Vertue of it, yet for my part, I lay a Waiter upon it for thirty eight Years, and am come off a Cripple at last. But yet you may read, that his long waiting upon it, and keeping close to it, in obedience to God's Ordinance, relating to it, had a full Recompence, with a perfect Cure; the Story you have at large in *John* 5. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 Verses. This Pool of *Bethesda* was a lively Figure of the Preaching of the Word, with the rest of the Ordinances of the Gospel, which are called the Healing Waters, *Ezek.* 47. 9. and the Fountain which is opened for Sin and Uncleanness, *Zech.* 13. 1. And as the Waters of *Bethesda* healed not until the Angel came down into them, giving a present Vertue to them for that purpose; so the Word and Ordinances of the Gospel, must receive their Power and Vertue from the Presence of Christ in them, who is the Angel of the Covenant; this and only this makes them healing to our leprous Souls, *John* 15. 3. Now are you Clean through the Word which I have spoken unto you. Beware then, as you value your Souls, that you give not way to a haughty Spirit, in slighting and neglecting the healing Waters of the Sanctuary, for fear lest you Perish and Die in your Leprosies: Oh! read and tremble at that word in *Heb.* 2. 3. *How shall we Escape if we neglect so great Salvation.*

2dly, There are a second sort of Lepers which are not healed by the cleansing Means of the Word and Ordinances of the Gospel, and they are your careless Hearers; which tho' they attend upon the Means and Ministry of the Word,

yet they do not seriously intend any saving Benefit to their Souls thereby. There are many whose Consciences will not allow them to neglect an Ordinance, yet never propose to themselves any spiritual End in their waiting upon them: There are several that will travel some Miles to be at a religious Meeting, where the Word is preached, but never design the Conversion and Regeneration of their Souls thereby. Such as these who have no higher End in waiting upon the Gospel, but only to keep Peace with their Consciences, are in the Eyes of Christ no better than Refusers of that healing Means, which he holds forth to them in the Gospel, there being (in his account) little difference betwixt not regarding the end of the Means and an open refusal of it; of such we read in *Ezek. 33. 31, 32.* *They come unto thee, as the People cometh, and sit before thee as my People, and they hear thy Words; but they will not do them, for with their Mouths they shew much Love, but their Hearts goeth after their Covetousness; for so thou art unto them as a very lovely Song of one that hath a pleasant Voice, and can play well on an Instrument, for they hear thy Words, but they do them not.*

2dly, A second thing observable about the Leper, is this:

After he had been with the Priest, and if his Disease was found to be a Leprosie, he was then to be separated from the rest of his Brethren, *Lev. 13. 46.* *All the Days wherein the Plague shall be in him; he shall be Defiled, he is Unclean, he shall dwell alone, without the Camp shall his Habitation be.* Now if we apply this to the Anti-type, we may note this Truth from it:

Doct. *That those Persons, which are under the Power of their spiritual Leprosies and Pollutions, are not only unfit for Fellowship and Communion with God, but with his People also.*

This is a Truth so clear, as if it were written with the Beams of the shining Sun: As, first of all, That God and spiritual Lepers (whose Leprosie is reigning in them) can have no Fellowship nor Communion together: *Isa. 59. 2.* *Your Iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your Sins have hid his Face from you.* *Hab. 1. 13.* *Thou art of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity, nor canst thou behold Evil.* *2 Cor. 14. 15.* *What Fellowship hath Righteousness with Unrighteousness, and what Communion hath Light with Darkness, and what Concord hath Christ with Belial.* Yea, though

though he be a King in his Royal Robes, and hath this Leprosie on him in the Dominion of it, God will have no Fellowship with him though he sits upon the Throne, *Psal. 94. 20. Shall the Throne of Iniquity have Fellowship with thee, which frameth Mischief by a Law?* Thus, as God will have no Fellowship with Lepers himself, so hath he prohibited his People from the same; this you see in *Lev. 13. 46.* That as soon as the Leprosie did appear upon any *Israelite*, he was to be separated from the Camp, he was to have no more Communion with his Brethren, nor they with him until his Leprosie were healed: And doth not the Apostle seem to apply this in a spiritual Sense to the People of God, as a Rule to be observed by the Churches of Christ in the times of the Gospel? Doth he not say in *2 Cor. 6. 15. What part hath he that believeth with an Infidel?* So *2 Thess. 3. 14. If any Man obey not our Word by this Epistle, note that Man, and have no Company with him, that he may be ashamed.* So *1 Cor. 5. 11. But now I have written unto you, not to keep Company; if any Man that is called a Brother, be a Fornicator, or Covetous, or an Idolater, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner, with such a one, no not to Eat.* Thus you see how plain and clear it is, First, That God will not; and, Secondly, His Will is, that his People should not have any Fellowship with spiritual Lepers. — And so we come to the Reason upon which this Truth is bottomed.

The Reason is this, That as one scabbed Sheep may spoil a whole Flock, so may one spiritual Leper spoil a whole Church: The Apostle told the *Corinthians*, that one incestuous Person amongst them, might leaven all the rest of the Society; if not with the same spiritual Pollution, yet with so much Guilt for their allowing of him amongst them, which might procure some heavy Judgment upon them, *1 Cor. 5. 6.* It's true, while we are in the World, we cannot avoid a common Commerce with them, upon a civil account, but we ought to avoid a spiritual Communion with them, in the highest Christian Ordinance, upon any account, because they are Lepers.

Use, This then may serve for Instruction to the Churches of Christ: First, Who they should keep out. Secondly, Who they should thrust out of their Fellowships and Communion.

First

First of all, this Truth may reach them who they should keep out of their Fellowships and Communion: namely, The leprous Person. None can deny but that the House of Israel were the visible Church of God; and few but will grant, That a spiritual Leprosie, is far more dangerous, therefore more to be avoided, than that which is corporal; so then, if the Church of God under the Law, were to drive out from their Communion, those which had the less dangerous Leprosie, then surely the Churches of Christ in Gospel-times, ought to keep out those from their Communion which have the more dangerous Leprosie upon them; therefore the same which the Apostle saith of him that is a Brother, may very well be applied to one (that with respect to particular Church-communion) would be a Brother, *If he be a Fornicator, or Covetous, or a Drunkard, or a Railer, or an Idolater, or an Extortioner, with such a one, no not to Eat,* 1 Cor. 5. 11.

2dly, This serves to instruct the People of God, who they are which they should thrust out of their Fellowships and Communion, (*viz*) Every spiritual unclean Leper, that will not be cleansed; you have seen, that as soon as the Leprosie was broken out upon the Body of the Jewish Leper, he was immediately put out of the Camp of Israel, which Camp was the Church of God: Lev. 13. 46. *As long as his Disease shall be upon him, he shall be defiled, he is unclean, he shall dwell alone, without the Camp shall be his Habitation.* So also you may read, how agreeable to this Levitical Rule, is the Order which Christ hath established in his Gospel-churches, Matt. 18. 15, 16, 17. with 1 Cor. 5. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 Verses. This special Care which ought to be taken by the Churches, in keeping close to this Rule, is not only enjoined upon the Ministers of the Gospel, but it was the great Duty of the Priests and Prophets under the Levitical Administration, Jer. 15. 19. *If thou take forth the Precious from the Vile, thou shalt be as my Mouth; let them return to thee, but return not thou unto them,* Ezek. 44. 6, 7. with Ver. 9. *And thou shalt say to the Rebellious, even to the House of Israel, thus saith the Lord, O ye House of Israel, let it suffice you for all your Abominations, in that you have brought into my Sanctuary Strangers uncircumcised in Heart, and uncircumcised in Flesh, to be in my Sanctuary to pollute it, even my House,* when

when ye offer my Bread, the Fat and the Blood, and they have broken my Covenant, because of all your Abominations. Only this Rule is to be observed, before the Leper is to be separated, Matt. 18. 15, 16. Go and tell him his Fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy Brother, but if he hear thee not, then tell it to the Church. It is not simply the Offence committed, which proves a Ground of casting out the spiritual Leper; but it's his persisting in his Offence, his refusing to return, and his unwillingness to be cleansed.

Thus far touching the Action of the Leper, in order to his Cleansing: First, He was to be brought to the Priest. Secondly, If his Disease were found to be a Leprosie, then was he to be separated from all Communion and Fellowship with his Brethren.

2dly, We next come to the Action of the Priest, by whom the Cure was to be wrought, and here we shall handle the Action of the Priest, together with the Means he was to use in order to the Cleansing of the Leper, Lev. 14. 4, 5, 6, 7. Then shall the Priest command to take for him that is to be cleansed, two Birds alive, and clean, and Cedar-wood, and Scarlet, and Hyssop. And the Priest shall command that one of the Birds be killed in an earthen Vessel, over running Water. As for the living Bird he shall take, and the Cedar-wood, and the Scarlet, and the Hyssop, and shall dip them and the living Bird, in the Blood of the Bird that was killed over the running Water. And he shall sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed from the Leprosie, seven times, and shall pronounce him Clean, and shall let the living Bird loose into the open Field. Now for the opening of this Mystry, we shall begin with the two Birds, which some think were two Sparrows, and they are called Clean, with respect to that Statute, Lev. 11. which made the difference betwixt Things allowed and disallowed to be Eaten; those Creatures which were allowed to be Eaten, were called Clean, of which kind were these Birds that are here used in the cleansing of the Leper. Now these two Birds are very significant of the twofold Work of Christ in our spiritual Cleansing from our leprous and polluted Natures.

For first of all, you read that the first Bird was killed, which shadowed out the Death of Christ; for as the Leper

per could not be healed of his corporal Leprosie without the shedding of the Blood of the innocent Sparrow, no more could we be healed of our spiritual Leprosie of Sin, without the shedding of the Blood of an innocent Saviour, *1 John 1. 7. And the Blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all Sin.* *Rev. 5. 9. For thou wast Slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy Blood.* *Heb. 9. 22. And without shedding of Blood is no Remission.*

2dly, The living Bird was to be let loose, or to be let to fly away into the open Field, which signified the Action of Christ in order to his Work of Intercession, who was likewise to be let go from the Grave, that from thence he might take his flight for Heaven, there to sit at the right-hand of God, to make Intercession for us, according to *Heb. 7. 25.* For as by his Death upon the Cross, he made a full and compleat Satisfaction for all our Sins; so by his Ascension to Heaven, he there is making continual Intercession for Sinners; and as by his Death upon the Cross, he made Peace with God for us, so by his Intercession, he maintains that Peace in God for us. And, again, as he by his blessed Sacrifice (in offering up of himself) did thereby purchase our Right to all the Promises, relating to Life and Godliness, so by his Intercession he powerfully prevails with his Father, that the Good of them might come down upon us.

3dly, And whereas you read, That the living Bird, with the Scarlet, the Cedar-wood, and the Hyssop, all which was to be dipt into the Blood of the slain Bird; this being done, it made the Scarlet, the Cedar-wood, and the Hyssop, so effectual in the Cleansing of the Leper. This great Mystery, signifies thus much to us, when applied to its Anti-type, That what Benefit upon a saving account there is in Christ, or of Christ, which any do receive in order to their effectual Redemption, and Soul-cleansing, it doth all originate in, or originally proceed from the Vertue, Worth, and Merit of the Sufferings and Blood of Christ, as the procuring cause of all. Have we any Benefit by any Office of Christ, or Righteousness in Christ, Grace from Christ, or relation to Christ? All this flows from the Spring and Fountain of a Christ crucified and slain for Sin; for you plainly see, that all the Means which was used in the
clean-

Cleanſing of the corporal Leper, took its Efficacy from the Bloud of the ſlain Bird, the Scarlet, the Cedar-wood, and the Hyſſop, were all dipt in the Bloud of the ſlain Bird. From whence we may note this Obſervation :

Doct. That the Bloud of Chriſt ſhed for Sin, is the only Procuring-cause, of all the Grace, Mercy, and Favour, which the Elect of God are capable to receive, both in the Life that now is, and that which is to come.

This is a Truth which doth abundantly evidence itſelf from the Scriptures ; Have we Grace and Sanctification in this Life ? This the Scripture attributes to the Bloud of Chriſt, as the Procuring-cause of it, *Heb. 9. 14. The Bloud of Chriſt purgeth our Conſciences from dead Works, to ſerve the Living God.* Have we Peace with God ? This he hath procured by the Bloud of his Croſs, *Col. 1. 20.* Have we Power and Strength to overcome our ſpiritual Enemies, Satan and the Luſts of the Fleſh ? This is done by the Bloud of the Lamb, *Rev. 12. 11.* In a word, There is not a good Action done or performed by us, but the Grace which enables us thereunto, is the Fruit of Chriſt's Bloud, *Heb. 13. 20, 21. The God that brought again from the dead our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the great Biſhop of our Souls, through the Bloud of the everlaſting Covenant, make you perfect in every good Work to do his Will, working in you that which is well-pleaſing in his ſight, through Jeſus Chriſt.* Is it Assurance, Joy, Peace in believing the Bloud of Jeſus Chriſt have procured this alſo, *Col. 1. 11, 12, 13, 14* Verſes : And ſo for Heaven and Glory to come, this is the Fruit of Chriſt's Purchaſing-bloud which hath accompliſhed all this, *Ephes. 1. 14.*

And ſo we come the Reason of the Point :

Reason.] This muſt be ſo, becauſe, what Good the Elect of God partake from him, either in this World, or in the World to come, let it be to their Sanctification here, or their Glorification hereafter ; all this muſt flow forth to them from the Love of God, as the grand Cauſe of it, *Ephes. 2. 4, 5, 6* Verſes, *But God who is rich in Mercy, for his great Love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in Sins, hath quickned us together with Chriſt, by Grace are ye ſaved, and hath raiſed us up together, and made us ſit together with Chriſt Jeſus in heavenly Places.* So that you plainly ſee, to be quickned from a Death in Sin, and to

be graciously Saved, (that is, from the Curse and Condemnation of the Law, *Gal.* 3. 13. with *Rom.* 8. 1. and from the Dominion of Sin, *Rom.* 6. 14. and from the Captivating-power of the Devil, *1 John* 3. 8. and from the Wrath of God, *Theff.* 1. 10. And after all this, to be dignified and exalted to that height of Honour,) so as to be made to sit with Christ, yea together with him in heavenly Places. The Apostle tells you in the fourth Verse, That the great Love of God is the Foundation of all this to the Elect: Now it cannot be, that God should deal with his Elect in such a way of Love, until he be first reconciled to them, and becomes their Friend; now he cannot become their Friend until a Reconciliation be made, for them, which was done, wrought out, and brought about by the Blood of Christ, *Rom.* 5. 8. *In that while we were yet Sinners, Christ died for us.* So Verse 10. *When we were Enemies, we were reconciled to God by the Death of his Son.* So *Col.* 1. 20. *And, having made Peace by the Blood of his Cross, by him to reconcile all things to himself.* Thus you see, how, through the Blood of Christ, the innocent Bird and Lamb of God, the way is abundantly opened, to God the Father's letting forth of his Grace and Love to the Elect, whom he had ordained thereunto, before the World began, *Ephes.* 1. 4.

And so we come to make some Application of the whole: 1st Use, Is to teach us Thankfulness to the ever-blessed God, for this special Benefit, which he hath so graciously afforded us in order to our spiritual Cleansing. Oh! Brethren, this was the highest Act of God's Love and Good-will to the lost Children of *Adam*, that could be manifested from Heaven itself, *Rom.* 5. 8. but God commended his Love towards us, in that while we were Sinners, Christ died for us: The meaning is, That there was nothing beyond this that could afford a higher Evidence of the Grace and Good-will of God to the lost World: For God to create us Creatures, was a wonderful Expression of his Power and Wisdom, it being a bringing of something out of nothing, a most adorable Act; but to save them when lost, the Fruit of which is their being made new Creatures, *2 Cor.* 5. 17. Created in Christ Jesus unto good Works, which God before ordained that we should walk in

in them, *Ephes. 2. 10.* This was the higheſt Expreſſion of God's Wiſdom, Power, Love, and Grace; that poſſibly could be maniſteſt in the Face of Men and Angels. What could *Abraham* give to God, of all he did poſſeſs, beyond the Life of his Son *Iſaac*? And, What could God give more to Sinners, than the Life of his Son? *John 3. 16.* God ſo loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him, ſhould not Perish, but have everlaſting Life. This was the moſt coſtly Means for a Cure, that Heaven and Earth could procure. Oh, Chriſtians! and ſhall we not be Thankful for this, and rejoyce in the Lord for this? How unſuitable to a *David*-like Spirit would this be in us? *Pſal. 103. 2, 3.* O bleſs the Lord, O my Soul, and forget not all his Benefits; who forgiveth all thine Iniquities, and healeth all thy Diſeaſes. Oh Brethren, this ſpecial Bloud, calls for ſpecial Thankfulneſs, and the precious Effects of it, calls for the moſt precious of our Obedience to God again; for as God the Father gave us his Son, ſo did God the Son give himſelf for us, that he might Redeem us from all Iniquity, and Purifie us to himſelf a peculiar People, zealous of good Works, *Titus 2. 14.*

2d Uſe, This ſhould ſerve to teach us all, only to look upon the Bloud of Chriſt for the Curing of our leprous Souls: Oh have a care of mingling Chriſt's Bloud with the polluting Droſs and Dregs of Creature-worth and Worthineſs: the Bloud of Chriſt will cleanſe the polluted Leper in the World, if it be applied in its own Purity by Faith; but if mixed with the leaſt of Self-merit, it ſpoils the Vertue, Power, and Efficacy of it, and renders it of no uſe to the Soul.

3d Uſe, Learn hence alſo to put an ineſtimable Value upon the Bloud of Chriſt; O remember it is the Bloud of Cleanſing, and no Bloud but this can cleanſe Lepers: Thou haſt heard, that nothing but the Bloud of the ſlain Sparrow could heal the corporal Leper, to ſhew you that nothing but the pure Bloud of Jeſus Chriſt, can cleanſe the Soul from his ſpiritual Leproſie. Oh what a high Price ſhould you put upon this Bloud! *Peter* calls it precious Bloud, *1 Pet. 1. 19.* Hence then, How ſhould we ſay of every thing (with the greateſt Indignation) that would offer itſelf as a Co-worker with Chriſt's Bloud, in the Cleanſing of our

Souls, as Paul did? *Phil. 3. 8. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but Loss, for the excellency of the Knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I have suffered the Loss of all things, and do count them but Dung that I may win Christ.*

P A R T III.

WE are next to speak to the earthen Vessel, over which the Innocent Bird was to be killed, in which Vessel was the running Water, *Lev. 14. 5. And the Priest shall command that one of the Birds be killed in an earthen Vessel, over running Water.* (Mark,) It must be running Water, which signifies the Purity and the Liveliness of it, in opposition to standing Water, which is usually dead and corrupt; therefore this Water in the earthen Vessel, must be running Water, it must be Water that hath Life and Purity in it.

But first of all, to begin with the earthen Vessel, which may signify the reality of the Humane Nature of Jesus Christ, from whence our Healing comes: You see that the Leper was cleansed by the Blood of the Bird, and so must we be cleansed (from our Soul-leprosie) by the Blood of Christ, if ever we be cleansed indeed, *1 John 1. 7.* Now this Blood could not proceed from Christ, as he was only God, abstracted from his Manhood; for as he was God only, he was no way capable either to suffer or to shed Blood; therefore the Godhead of Christ assumes an earthen Vessel, even our Humane Nature to his Divine, answering the earthen Vessel, over which the Sparrow was to be killed, that so out of that Humane Nature, he might issue forth the Blood of our Cleansing: He was born of a Virgin, he took her very Nature upon him, but not the Sinfulness of it in the least degree, no, he left all that behind; and this Humane Nature was very earthly, for from the Earth it came, and to the Earth it must return again: And, inasmuch as the Body of our Saviour was made up of this earthy Nature, he (as to his Body) may well be called an earthen Vessel, signified by the Vessel over which the Bird was killed.

Secondly, By the running Water, in this earthen Vessel, is understood by some, the Water of Sanctification, which comes

comes from him, for, ſaith *John*, *He came by Water and Blood*: But this cannot be excluſive of the Divine Nature of the Son of God, which rendred the whole Sacrifice of Chriſt, only ſufficient to Cleanſe us from our ſpiritual Leproſie, and Soul-pollution, in the ſight of God. For as the Godhead of Chriſt, could not iſſue forth Blood to Cleanſe us, (apart from his Manhood) ſo neither could the Blood of Chriſt (apart from his Godhead) have been any way availing to our Cleanſing from the Guilt or Filth of Sin in our Souls; ſo that the Union of the two Natures, in the Perſon of Chriſt, became ſo wonderfully efficacious to our Juſtification and Sanctification, wherein lieth the Leper's ſpiritual Cleanſing; hence, Chriſt's Blood is called the Blood of God, *Acts* 20. 28. becauſe of the Union of the two Natures in the Perſon of Chriſt. Thus you ſee how the earthen Veſſel and the pure Water muſt go together in our ſpiritual Cleanſing.

From whence we ſhall obſerve this Note :

Doct. *That the Blood of Jeſus Chriſt, who is very God, and very Man, is the only appointed Means to Cleanſe our Souls from our ſinful Leproſies and Pollutions in the Sight of God.*

The Truth of this cannot be called in queſtion by any, who queſtion not the Truth of Scripture, *Rev.* 1. 5. *And from Jeſus, who is the faithful Witneſs, the firſt Begotten from the Dead, unto him that hath loved us, and waſhed us from our Sins in his own Blood.* *Rev.* 5. 9. *For thou waſt Slain, and haſt Redeemed us unto God by thy Blood.* *1 John* 1. 7. *And the Blood of Jeſus Chriſt cleanſeth us from all Sin.* *Heb.* 9. 14. *The Blood of Chriſt, who, through the eternal Spirit, offered himſelf without Spot to God, purge your Conſciences from dead Works to ſerve the Living God.*

And ſo we come to the Reaſons of this Truth, and the firſt is this :

Reason 1.] It muſt be ſo, becauſe the Blood of Chriſt is the only Means which God hath appointed to be uſed for this Purpoſe, in oppoſition to all other Means whatſoever, *Acts* 4. 12. *Neither is there Salvation in any other, for there is no other Name under Heaven, whereby we muſt be ſaved.*

Reason 2.] And it muſt be ſo, becauſe, as God hath only appointed this Means for Soul-cleanſing, ſo hath he (only) fitted this Means for Soul-recovery: *Iſa.* 61. 1. *The Spirit*

Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath appointed me to preach good Tidings unto the Meek; he hath sent me to bind up the Broken-hearted, to proclaim Liberty to the Captives, and to open the Prison Doors to them that are Bound.

Therefore, whoever they are that shall make use of any other Means, besides this, for the Cure of their Souls, will find it so far from Cleansing, that himself will be found guilty of the highest Presumption, because it is a slighting of the Blood of the Covenant, and counting it a common thing, as *Paul* speaks, *Heb. 10. 29.* and then, upon so doing, the same Apostle tells you, that such Men who are found guilty of such a Sin, will find it a fearful thing to fall into the Hands of the Living God, *Ver. 31.*

And so we come to the Application of the Point :

Use, This serves to inform us then of the dangerous Principles of two sorts of Persons, (First, Of the Socinians. Secondly, Of the Quakers;) who, betwixt them both, deny the pure Water in the earthen Vessel, and the earthen Vessel in which the pure Water is.

First of all, The Socinians, who deny the Godhead of Christ. Secondly, The Quakers, who deny the Manhood of Christ in Being; for if Christ be not God, and of the same essential Nature with the Father, as the Socinians affirm; and, on the other hand, if Christ retain not his Humane Body now in Heaven, as the Quakers affirm, then is he neither God nor Man, and consequently he is nothing at all; who thereby make good what the Apostle said of old, speaking of a sort of Men which should spring up in the latter Ages of the World, that should deny the Lord that bought them, bringing thereby swift Destruction upon themselves, *2 Pet. 2. 1.* with *Jude*, 4 *Ver.*

PART IV.

Thus you see the Mystery of the earthen Vessel, with the running pure Water in it, opened to you; we next come to speak of the rest of the Things which the Priest was to use in the Cleansing of the Leper, which was the Scarlet, the Cedar-wood, and the Hyssop.

THE Assemblies Annotations speak to this purpose, That the Scarlet, Cedar-wood, and the Hyssop; these three things

things together, made up the Brush wherewith the Leper was to be sprinkled, in order to his Cleansing; the Cedar-wood made up the Handle of the Brush, the Hyssop made up the Brush itself, and the Scarlet, which was a Scarlet Thread, with this Thread the Hyssop was bound fast to the Cedar-handle: Now the Mystery of which I conceive to be this, The Handle of the Brush, which was made of Cedar-wood, may signifie the Word of God, the instrumental Means of our spiritual Cleansing, for as Cedar is sweet and durable, so is the Word of God. +

First of all, The Word of God is like Cedar for sweetness, *Psal.* 19. 10. The Word is more to be desired than Gold, yea sweeter than the Hony-comb; thus you see how sweet the Word is to the Pallate for Taste, and it is no less sweet in the Nostrils for smell, *Cant.* 1. 2. Thy Name is as Ointment poured forth; that is, the Name of Christ published, or poured out in the Preaching of the Gospel.

2. The Word of God may be compared to Cedar for the durableness of it, *1 Pet.* 1. 25. *But the Word of the Lord endureth for ever, and this is the Word, which by the Gospel is preached to you.*

2dly, By the Hyssop-brush, we may understand the Grace of Faith, another instrumental Means of our Cleansing from our spiritual Leprosie: For as Hyssop is sweet, and not so subject to corrupt and wither so soon as other Herbs are, so the Grace of Faith, is a most sweet and precious Grace, it is called precious Faith, for the sweetness and uncorruptibleness of it, *2 Pet.* 1. 1. Good Education, natural Parts, and moral Gifts, may wither and come to nothing, but true Faith is a Grace that never loseth its Life, Sap, or Saviour.

3dly, And by the Scarlet Thread, we may understand the Purchasing-bloud of Christ, which is the Procuring-cause of that Vertue, and Healing-property which we find and feel in the Word and Faith, in order to our spiritual Cleansing: Now the Sprinkling-brush being thus finished, the Scarlet Thread binding the Hyssop to the Cedar-handle; with this Brush, the Priest was to sprinkle the Leper seven times, the Sum of which holds out to us, our Justification and Sanctification, which is procured for us by our High-Priest Jesus Christ.

From

From all which we may observe this Point of Doctrine :

Doct. That who-ever intends to be Justified from the Guilt of Sin, and Sanctified from the Filth of Sin, must get himself sprinkled with the Bloud of Christ, through the Word of God, by the Hyssop of Faith and Believing. Hence the Scripture attributes, both our Justification and Sanctification to the Bloud of Christ, as the meritorious and Procuring-cause of it : First, For our Justification, Rom. 5. 9. Much more then, being now Justified by his Bloud.

2dly, Our Sanctification is meritoriously procured by the same Means, Heb. 9. 14. How much more shall the Bloud of Christ purge our Consciences from dead Works to serve the Living God ?

2. As the Scriptures do direct us to the Bloud of Christ alone, as the meritorious Cause of our Justification and Sanctification, so doth it direct to Faith as the Means which only can make the Application of both to the Soul, *Rom. 5. 1. Being Justified by Faith, we have Peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.* Not that Faith can Justifie of itself, a part from the Object of it, which is Jesus Christ, but only as Faith apprehends and applies the Bloud and Obedience of Christ to the Soul, which is the alone Matter of our Justification ; and as Faith is the Instrument of our Justification, so it is of our Sanctification also, *Acts 15. 9. And put no difference between them and us, purifying their Hearts by Faith.*

Reason.] Now, the Reason why the Soul is to make use of Faith, in his Justification from the Guilt of Sin, and in his Cleansing from the Filth of Sin, is, because God hath ordered Faith to be the Grace, which must deal with the Bloud of Christ, which is the Procuring-cause of both : For as nothing can Justifie or Cleanse the Soul (if applied) but the Bloud of Christ, so there is nothing which can apply the Bloud of Christ to the Soul, but the Hyssop of Faith and Believing, *Heb. 11. 6. But without Faith it is impossible to Please him.*

And so we come to the Application of the Point :

Use, This should teach us all to look after Faith, yea, above all things, to labour for this Grace of Believing, if ever we mean to be healed of our sinful Leprosie and Uncleannefs. Oh Friends ! this is the Means that can only

only do your Souls good ; slight this, and you slight your greatest Mercy under Heaven ; because you thereby slight that very Means which God hath appointed for a Soul-cure : Neglect this (saith Christ) and you die in your Sins, *John* 8. 24. This was *Israel's* Sin, and that which kept them in their Sins, as the Apostle speaks, *Rom.* 10. 3. They submitted not themselves to the Righteousness of God, which is else-where called the Righteousness of Faith, *Rom.* 4. 13. It was not enough for the Jewish Leper, only to use the Blood of the Bird, for his Cleansing, no, but he must dip the Hyssop-brush into the Blood also, he must keep to the Means, and the whole Means, which God instituted and appointed for his Cleansing, *Deut.* 12. 32. *What thing soever I have commanded you, observe to do it, thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it.*

If the Priest had used the Hyssop-brush, without the Blood of the Bird, or if he had dipt the Hyssop-brush in any other Liquor, as Water, Milk, or Wine, this would not have been Cleansing to the Leper ; or, if he had made use of the Blood of the Bird, without dipping of the Hyssop-brush into it, this would all as little have wrought the Cure, because this would have been a Contradiction to God's Institution ; but both of the Means must be used together - the Blood of the Bird, with the Hyssop-brush bound fast to the Cedar-wood, these three things together would be Healing to the Leper, because it was the Means of God's Appointment.

The Mystery of which (when opened) shews us thus much, That the Blood of Christ, handed, out to us by the Word of God, and applied to our Souls by Faith, (it being the Institution of God for our Soul-cure) this, and only this, will Cleanse our Souls of the foulest Leprosie that ever hapned to a Sinner in this Life ; for we find, that it was this which *David* desired might be applied to him, in a time of Soul-defilement and Pollution, *Psal.* 51. 7. *Purge me with Hyssop, and I shall be Clean, Wash me and I shall be whiter than the Snow.* Shall we think that *David* (in this Cleansing-work) did look no farther than the bare Hyssop, and the typocal Sprinkling there-with, for the cleansing of his Soul from the guilt and filth of Sin ; no, no, doubtless it was the spiritual Hyssop of Faith, dipt in the Blood of Christ, which was the chief thing in his Re-

quest, and the principal thing which his Eye was fixt upon. So, Soul, this is thy great Duty also, to pour out thy Soul in Prayer to God, as *David* did, for this Grace of Believing: Oh! spread thy Leprosie before him; open the Plague-fore of thy Heart in his sight; take off thy gouty Clouts, and lay open thy Wounds and Ulcers in his sight, and beg him to cast his merciful Eyes towards thee, who is the only Physician of Value, that can heal thee of thy foul Disease, which neither Men nor Angels can Cure besides himself: Oh! wrestle with him as *Jacob* did, *Gen.* 32. 24, 25, 26. Cease not, give him no rest until he hath sent down the Hyssop-brush of Believing into thy Heart, that by it, thy Heart may be purified from thy Soul-pollution, according to *Acts* 15. 9. A sight of Misery does sometimes (in a tender-hearted Physician) stir up Bowels of Mercy to a ready Helping of the Distressed; but much more in God, the greatest Healer and Helper that is in Heaven or Earth; and for thy Encouragement to make to him for Healing, read often that Text, *Jam.* 1. 5. *If any Man lack Wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth liberally to all Men, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him.*

2. Lay thyself in the Ways and Walks of God, even in those Places where he useth to dispense this precious Grace of Faith; the Ways and Walks of God are in his Ordinances, and amongst his golden Candlesticks, *Rev.* 1. 13. which golden Candlesticks are his Gospel-churches, the Places where his Worship and Ordinances are, as Prayer, preaching of the Word, with the Sacraments and Seals of the New-covenant, in these things he meets with the Souls of Men, *Isa.* 64. 5. *He meeteth him which works Righteousness, and those that remember him in his Ways.* Here it is that God maketh the Sorrowful to rejoyce, and maketh glad the Hearts of the Righteous; here it is in these things, that he giveth out the Sense of his Love, Grace and Favour in Christ Jesus; here it is that he poureth forth the rich Anointings, even the Graces of his holy Spirit, and amongst them this Grace of Faith, *Rom.* 10. 17. *Faith cometh by Hearing, and Hearing by the Word of God.* Oh! then, be admonished to be a constant and diligent Waiter upon these Ordinances of the Gospel; neglect no Opportunity of doing thy Soul good this way, for thou dost not know

know how ſoon God may meet thee with healing and cleaning Grace in theſe Ways and Walks of his.

P A R T V.

Thus having finiſhed the Work about the Sprinkling-bruſh, which was made up of Scarlet, Cedar-wood, and Hyſſop; we next come to ſpeak of ſome other things which were uſed in the Cleanſing of the Leper.

THe Particulars you may read at your leiſure, as they are noted in *Lev. 14. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18 Verſes*, where, firſt of all, the Prieſt was to kill the Lamb in the holy Place, then was he to take ſome of the Bloud of the Lamb, and put it upon the right Ear, the Thumb of the right Hand, and the great Toe of the right Foot of him that was to be cleanſed; then was the Prieſt to take ſome of a Log of Oil, and pour it into the Palm of his own left Hand, then was he to ſprinkle the Oil, with his Finger ſeven times, before the Lord. This Work was done by a Synecdochy, tipping ſome parts of the Body for the whole, which virtually comprehends the ſeveral Parts of the Whole Man; which Miſtery ſhadows out theſe two things to us, namely, Our Juſtification and Sanctification by Jeſus Chriſt.

First, The Lamb that was to be killed, was a Type of Chriſt dying for Sinners, as the Bird was before, the Bloud of both being of one and the ſame Signification, typing out the Bloud of Chriſt, as the meritorious Cauſe of our being waſhed and cleanſed from the Guilt of all our Sins, *1 John 1. 7.*

2. The Oyl uſed in this Cleanſing-work, typed forth to us the Graces of the Spirit of God in our Sanctification, of which the Apoſtle ſpeaks in *1 John 2. 27. But the Anointing which ye have received of him, abideth in you, and ye need not that any Man teach you, but as the ſame Anointing teacheth you all things, and is Truth.* Now we need not queſtion, but that *John* the Divine hath reference to the Anointing-oil which was poured forth upon the Head of the levitical High-Prieſt, who was a Type of Jeſus Chriſt, *Lev. 8. 30.* of which *David* ſpeaks more at large in *Pſalm 133. Ver. 2.* which the Apoſtle applies to Chriſt, *Heb. 1. 9.*

Thou hast loved Righteousness and hated Iniquity, therefore God, even thy God hath anointed thee with the Oyl of Gladness above thy Fellows.

And one reason that's given of Christ's being anointed, you have in *John*, *John* 1. 16. *That of his Fulness we might all receive, and Grace for Grace:* For as Oyl is beautifying to the Countenance, mollifying to the Flesh, and cheering to the Heart, so is the Oyl of Grace and Sanctification; its beautifying to the Soul, *Ezek.* 16. 14. *Thou art Perfect through my Comeliness put upon thee, saith the Lord.*

2dly, It's softning to the Heart, *Job* 23. 16. *For God maketh my Heart soft.*

3dly, And it is comforting and cheering to the Whole Man, *Psal.* 4. 7. *Thou hast put Gladness into my Heart, more than in the time that their Corn and Wine increased.*

One thing more to be observed in the Cleansing the Jewish Leper, is this; namely, That the Priest was to make an Application both of the Bloud and Oil to the Leper; not the Bloud without the Oil, nor the Oil without the Bloud, but both of them together, as soon as the Priest could apply each one after the other, the Bloud applied first, and then the Oil next.

From hence we may observe this Point of Doctrine:

Doct. *That when Christ doth Justifie a Soul by his Bloud, the same doth he Sanctifie by the Oil of his Grace.* +

Look through the whole Book of God, and you will find nothing more a truth than this, nor can you read of one Person therein, who is recorded for a justified Man, by the Bloud of Christ, but you shall find it affirmed of him, that he was a sanctified Man by the Oil of Christ's Grace; besides, How fully doth the Word speak out the Truth of the thing itself, *Rom.* 8. 30. *Moreover, whom he did Predestinate, them he also Called.* *1 Pet.* 1. 2. *Elect, according to the Fore-knowledge of God, through the Sanctification of the Spirit.* *1 John* 5. 6, 7, 8. *This is he that came by Water and Bloud, even Jesus Christ, not by Water only, but by Water and Bloud; for there are three that bear Record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one; and there are three that bear Witness in Earth, the Spirit, the Water and Bloud, and these three agree in one.* *2 Thess.* 2. 13. *Because God hath from the beginning, chosen you to Salvation thro' Sanctification and Belief of the Truth.* And

And ſo we come to the Reason of the Point :

Reason.] Now the Reason why, where Chriſt Juſtifies by his Blood, there he Sanctifies by his Spirit, is, that the Juſtified might be made meet and fit Temples for himſelf to live in here ; and alſo, that they may be filled and made meet to dwell with him hereafter. Firſt, Chriſt muſt dwell in his People here in this Life, *Ephes. 3. 17. That Chriſt may dwell in your Hearts by Faith. 1 Cor. 6. 19. Know ye not that your Body is the Temple of the Holy Ghoſt, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own.* Thus, as Chriſt fits the Souls of his People, by Grace and Sanctification, as Temples for himſelf to dwell in here, ſo alſo by the ſame means doth he prepare them, that they may be Company meet to dwell with him in Glory hereafter, *2 Theſſ. 2. 14. Whereunto he hath called you by our Goſpel, to the obtaining of the Glory of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Col. 1. 12. Who hath made you meet to be Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light.*

Now it's only Sanctification that can fit, prepare, and qualifie the Soul, as a Habitation fit for Chriſt to take up his Reſidence in, while in this Life ; and it is nothing ſhort of true Sanctification, which can prepare the Soul to live in Glory with Chriſt, when this Life is over, *Acts 15. 9. Purifying their Hearts by Faith. And, without Holineſs, no Man ſhall ſee the Lord, Heb. 12. 14.*

The ſecond Reason of the Point is this, becauſe, all thoſe which are Chriſt's juſtified Ones, are ordained thereby to bring forth Fruit to God ; this is what our Saviour told his Diſciples, That the reaſon why his Father elected them by his Grace, and why himſelf redeemed them by his Blood, and juſtified them by his Obedience, all this was that they might bring forth holy Fruit to God, *Ephes. 2. 10. For ye are his Workmanſhip, created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good Works, which God hath before ordained that we ſhould Walk in them. Ephes. 1. 4. According as he hath choſen us in him, before the Foundation of the World, that we ſhould be Holy, and without Blame before him in Love. John 15. 16. Ye have not choſen me, but I have choſen you, and ordained you, that you ſhould go and bring forth Fruit, and your Fruit ſhould remain.*

Now this Fruitfulneſs can never be brought forth, without Grace and Sanctification be firſt poured forth upon the Heart ;

Heart ; for, whatever the Fruit be that is brought forth, it can be of no other kind than the Root is from whence it springs ; if the Root be but Nature's Qualification, (take it in its highest Flourish) yet the Fruit, which springs from it, is but Rottenness and Hypocrisie in the sight of God : The best that is spoken of the Fruit which the Children of Nature do bring forth in the Eyes of God, is what you have recorded in *Deut. 32. 32, 33. For their Vine is as the Vine of Sodom, and of the Fields of Gamorrah ; their Grapes are Grapes of Gall, their Clusters are bitter, their Wine is the Poison of Dragons, and the cruel Venome of Asps.* So that where the Oil of Grace is not the Root, there the best of our Obedience will not pass for Fruit in God's Eyes, *Matt. 7. 18. A good Tree cannot bring forth evil Fruit, neither can a corrupt Tree bring forth good Fruit.* Therefore the Root must be Grace and Sanctification, or the Fruit will meet with no less than final Rejection : Let it be the greatest of Self-denial, Patience, Temperance, Self-mortification, Meekness, Works of Charity, Prayer, with the performance of any other Duties done in the Worship of God, if it flows not from the Root of true Grace and Sanctification in the Heart, all is abominable in the Sight of God, *Prov. 21. 27. The Sacrifices of the Wicked is Abomination, how much more when he bringeth it with a wicked Mind ?*

Use, This shews us then, how much they are mistaken about their eternal State, who think they are Justified by Christ's Blood, and yet were never Sanctified by his Spirit. How many Thousands are there of these, living in a Gospel-professing Kingdom, which are held under the Power of this Soul-damning Delusion, who will not believe, but they are Justified in the sight of God, though they were never yet Sanctified in the sight of Men ? They are just like a company of Drunkards, who dreamed, that they were all Feasting in a Royal Palace ; but when they awoke, they found themselves made fast, with their Feet in the Stocks : Of such a sort of Dreamers James speaks, *Jam. 2. 18. Yea, a Man may say, Thou hast Faith, and I have Works ; shew me thy Faith without thy Works, and I will shew thee my Faith by my Works. Thou believest there is one God, thou doest well ; the Devils also believe, and tremble : But wilt thou know, O vain Man, that Faith without Works is dead. Oh never*

never think, that the Blood of Atonement hath been shed for thee, if the Oil of Sanctification hath not been poured forth upon thee.

The second Use is to instruct us how to attain to some hopeful Assurance of our Justification, which is by a Trial made of our Sanctification; I know that it is much a Query amongst the doubting part of Christians, Oh, How shall we do to know whether we be in a Justified State and Condition?

Ans. Look into your Hearts, and search whether the Oil of Grace be infused into it; Grace changeth the Heart, *Ezek.* 36. 26. Grace reneweth the Heart, *Titus* 3. 5. Grace regenerateth the Heart, *John* 3. 3. Grace turns the old Man into a new Creature, *2 Cor.* 5. 17. Grace purifieth the Heart, *Acts* 15. 9. And purgeth the Heart from dead Works, *Heb.* 9. 14. Grace works Desires after Christ, *Psal.* 42. 1, 2. Grace imbitters Sin to the Soul, *Jer.* 2. 91. Grace crucifies the World with the Affections and Lusts thereof, *Gal.* 5. 24. *Gal.* 6. 24. Grace puts the highest Value upon Jesus Christ, *Phil.* 3. 8. Grace makes the Word sweeter than the Honey-comb, *Psal.* 119. In a word, The gracious Soul can better live without its appointed Food, than it can without Prayer, *Psal.* 55. 17. *Psal.* 109. 4. Grace is a living Principle, which never will lie still, but will be working, stirring, acting and moving in the Soul: Grace cannot be idle, it will still be bringing forth things new and old; here you have a Looking-glass before you, present your Hearts before this Glass, and see what you can espy of these Signs of Grace within your Souls, in order to the finding out of your Justification by the Blood of Christ, the Lamb slain for the Cleansing of your spiritual Leprosie.

2. Thus, after the Priest had poured out the Oil into the Palm of his Hand, we next come to take notice of the Parts of the Leper's Body, which the Priest was to apply the Oil unto, and that was to the Tip or Lap of the right Ear, the Thumb of the right Hand, and the great Toe of the right Foot, which Parts, (*viz.*) The Ear, Thumb or Hand, and Foot, are the three principal Members of Service to the whole Body; and you find, that the Blood of Christ, which was typed out by the Blood of the Lamb and the Bird, the Apostle calls it the Price which Bought us. Now the Purchase which Christ made for us, is twofold:

1st,

The Leper, and

1st, From the Curse and Condemnation of the Law, *Rom. 8. 1. with Gal. 3. 13.*

2^{dly}, He by the same Price bought us for his Use and Service, *1 Cor. 6. 20. For ye are Bought with a Price, therefore glorifie God in your Bodies and Souls, which are the Lord's.* So that the Priest's putting of the Bloud and Oil upon the right Ear, Hand and Foot, of the Leper, that was to be Cleanfed, shadowed out these Mysteries to us :

First of all, as to Priest's applying of the Bloud of the slain Lamb, to the right Ear, Hand and Foot, which are the three principal Members of Service to the whole Body, it notes to us this Truth for our Observation, That the same Bloud of Christ, which redeemed us from Wrath to come, did also purchase us for that Work and Service which he commands us to do for him ; for so much as this I gather from the Priest's tipping of the right Ear, Thumb, and Toe of the right Foot of the Leper, with the Bloud of the slain Lamb, which Lamb was a Type of Christ ; which Action held a Congruity to the levitical Manner of making Men perpetual Servants to the Jewish Masters, *Exod. 21. 5, 6. If the Servant shall plainly say, I love my Master, my Wife, and my Children, I will not go out free ; then his Master shall bring him unto the Judges, he shall also bring him unto the Door, or to the Door-post, and his Master shall bore his Ear through with an Awl, and he shall serve him for ever.* So in like manner, the Leper that was to be Cleanfed, was to have the Bloud of the Lamb tipt upon his Ear, to be a professed Servant of the levitical Administration (by which he was Cleanfed) for ever.

Now, inasmuch as the Bloud of the Lamb, (by which the corporal Leper was Cleanfed) was a Type of the Bloud of Christ, and the corporal Leper a Figure of a spiritual Leper, and his corporal Cleansing binding him to perpetual Service, typos of that perpetual Obligation which every spiritual-cleanfed Leper lies under to Christ, altogether affords us this Note :

Doct. That he which intends to be redeemed from Sin, the Curse and Condemnation of the Law and Wrath to come, must become willing to give up himself to the Service of Christ for ever.

For

For the proof of this Truth, read 1 Cor. 6. 19, 20. *You are not your own, you are bought with a Price, therefore glorifie God in your Bodies and Spirits, which are God's.* As if the Apostle had said, O, ye *Corinthians*, remember that the Bloud of your Redemption hath been put upon the tip of your right Ears, your Hands, and Feet, in token of your perpetual Service to Christ, as the Levitical-servant had his Ear bored through with an Awl, to be his Master's Servant for ever ; Oh, so hath the Bloud of Christ been upon your Ears also, to make you his perpetual Servants for ever, *you are bought with a Price, you are not your own, therefore glorifie him in your Bodies and Spirits, which are his.* Have a care that you rob him not of his Right in you, in giving that Service to the Devil, World, and the Flesh, which is only due to him.

And so we come to the Reason of the Point :

Reason.] Why, that Soul, who would have Redemption by Christ, must be willing to become a perpetual Servant to Christ, is because Christ redeems none, but upon that Condition, *Isa. 1. 19. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good things of the Land.* *Heb. 5. 9. He is the Author of eternal Salvation, to as many as obey him.* *Rom. 8. 13. If ye live after the Flesh, ye shall die ; but if through the Spirit ye mortifie the Deeds of the Body, ye shall live.* So *Ver. 6. For to be carnally minded is Death, but to be spiritually minded is Life and Peace.*

Thus you see how Conditional the Promises are, which speak out a Soul's Benefit, by the Redeeming-bloud of Christ, which do all call upon us for a willing, chearful and sincere Obedience to Christ, though we grant, That it is not an old, but a New Covenant-condition, even such a Condition, that the Grace and gracious Aid, which only can enable us to perform the Condition, is graciously given into the Soul by Jesus Christ, and who will as graciously accept our Endeavours, (though clothed with many Weaknesses and Infirmities) so that our Obedience to him be but sincere, *2 Cor. 8. 12. If there be first a willing Mind, it is accepted according to what a Man hath, and not according to that he hath not.*

And so we come to make some Application of this Matter :

1st Use, This informs us then, why the Number is so small, which comes under the Yoke of Jesus Christ; the Reason is, because there are so few that are willing to come up to the Terms he propounds, which is, a willing Subjection to the Government of his Word and Spirit, which is the Condition he propounds to all that would have an Interest in his Salvation: They would willingly accept of his Blood to wash away the Guilt of Sin from their Souls, but they like not to have it tip't or applied to their Ears, to engage them to his Work and Service: they would be made happy, but not holy; but this cannot be, because this would prove a flat Contradiction to the Design of God, in sending of his Son from Heaven, *Isa. 55. 4. Behold, I have given him for a Witness to the People, a Leader and Commander to the People. Acts 5. 31. Him hath God the Father exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour. Psal. 2. 10, 11, 12. Be wise, now therefore, O ye Kings; be instructed, ye Judges of the Earth: Serve the Lord with fear, rejoyce before him with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his Wrath is kindled but a little.*

Such as these may well be called Balaam's Disciples, whose Desire was more for a happy Death, than for a holy Life; *Let me die the Death of the Righteous, and let my last end be like his, Numb. 23. 10.* But (alas!) who can sufficiently lament the fearful Disappointment which such Hypocrites will meet with, when all their Hope shall become like the Spider's Web to them, whose present Confidence, for a happy End at last, lieth only in a few faint fruitless Desires that it may, and in a few vain Hopes that it will be, as well with them at last, as it will be with those who make a greater Shew for Religion than they do? Their Hope is, that that merciful God which made them, will not destroy them. There is one dreadful Text of Scripture written against all such Soul-deluded Sinners, *Deut. 29. 19, 20. And it shall come to pass, when he heareth the Words of this Curse, that he bless himself in his Heart, saying, I shall have Peace, though I walk in the Imaginations of my Heart, to add Drunkenness to Thirst. The Lord will not spare that Man, but then the Anger of the Lord, and his Jealousie shall smoke against that Man, and all the Curses that are written in this Book shall lie upon him, and the Lord shall blot out his Name from under Heaven.* 2d Use

2d Use, Let this ſerve in the next place, to perſwade the cleanſed People of God, to ſtudy all they can to be ſerviceable to Jeſus Chriſt, becauſe you are bought by Chriſt to that end and purpoſe, 1 Cor. 6. 19, 20. *You are not your own, for you are bought with a Price, therefore glorifie God in your Bodies and Spirits which are his.* Oh, remember you carry the Mark of Chriſt's Servants upon the Tip or Lap of your Ears; you are his Cleanſed Lepers, and the Leper, when Cleanſed, was to have his right Ear marked with the Bloud of his Cleanſing, in token that now he is no more his own, but wholly his, and for his Uſe and Service from whom he had the Cure, ſo this is the Voice which continually hangs at the Ears of the Cleanſed Lepers of Chriſt, *Thou ſhalt Worſhip the Lord thy God, and him only ſhalt thou Serve.* So Rom. 12. 1. *I beſeech you Brethren, by the Mercies of God, that you preſent your Bodies as living Sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reaſonable Service, and be not conformable to this World, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your Mind.* And as your Service is Chriſt's Right, ſo it is your Honour; Paul knew that he could not dignifie himſelf in any thing ſo much, as he did in writing himſelf the Servant of Jeſus Chriſt, Rom. 1. 1. *Paul a Servant of Jeſus Chriſt.*

Object. But you may ſay, who are there that are more ſlighted, deſpiſed, and reproachfully loaded with all manner of Contempt and Scorn, than theſe are whom you count the Servants of Jeſus Chriſt?

I Answer, But who are they, and what are they, which ſo evilly treat the Servants of Jeſus Chriſt, are they any other than the blind, ignorant Rabble of the World, ſuch whom the Word of God counts the Dregs of the Earth? *Pſal. 119. 119 ver.* What matter is it to hear a Man that was born Blind, to ſpeak reproachfully of the Sun, or to hear a Man that's born Deaf, to ſpeak contemptibly of Muſick, or to hear an ignorant Fool ſpeak deridingly of the beſt of Learning? Is the Sun, Muſick or Learning any thing the worſe for this; or doth it detract any thing from the Excellency of theſe things? Whoſe Opinion will you rather cleave unto about this Point, either the Opinion of the blind ignorant World, which wholly lieth in Wickedneſs, or the Opinion of the Penmen of Scripture? The Word

saith, That the Servants of Christ are the honourablest Men in the World, yea, that they are to be accounted worthy of double Honour, 1 *Tim.* 5. 17; yea, God himself doth Honour them, 1 *Sam.* 2. 30. with *Psal.* 91. 15; and because God honours them himself, therefore he makes them Honourable in the Eyes of others; yea, God hath made many of his Servants to be highly honoured in the Eyes of the Heathen and professed Pagans, *Gen.* 23. 4. The Children of *Heth*, how highly were they made to Honour *Abraham*? Hear us my Lord, for thou art a mighty Prince amongst us, in the choice of our Sepulchers bury thy Dead. What a wonderful Honour was there given to *Joseph* by *Pharaoh*? *Gen.* 41. 39, 42. And *Pharaoh* said to *Joseph*, Forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this, there is none so Discreet and Wise as thou art: And *Pharaoh* took off his Ring from his Hand, and put it upon *Joseph's* Hand, and arrayed him with Vestures of fine Linnen, and put a golden Chain about his Neck. So the like we read of *Solomon*, 2 *Chron.* 9. 23. And all the Kings of the Earth sought the Presence of *Solomon* to hear his Wisdom, that God put into his Heart. The like we read of the Honour which *Belsazzar*, a Pagan, gave to *Daniel*, *Dan.* 5. 29. Then commanded *Belsazzar*, and they clothed *Daniel* with Scarlet, and put a Chain of Gold about his Neck, and made Proclamation concerning him, that he should be the third Ruler in the Kingdom.

Thus you see, though some base-spirited Men may despise the Servants of God, yet, when God pleaseth, he can make the Wicked'st that are to Honour them at the highest rate; therefore, let the Opinion of the World be what it will, about the People of God, my Opinion is, and I hope ever will be, That it's far better, and a thousand times more honourable to be a Servant of Christ in Rags, than to be the Devil's Slave, in the most glorious Royal Robes; and that the meanest Christian (if Sincere) is far more Estimable, with Christ's Cross upon his Back, than the highest Monarch (if Graceless) with his Royal Crown upon his Head.

Secondly, The next thing that the Priest was to do, was to dip his Finger in the Oil, and to apply it to the same Parts unto which the Bloud was applied before, which was first to the Ear, binding it to the Duty of hearing Christ's Voice,

John 10. 27. Then to the Hand, binding it to the Duty of working Righteousness, *Phil. 2. 12.* Lastly, To the Foot, binding of that to the Duty of Walking in the Ways of God's Commandments, *Jer. 7. 23.* Thus, when all these parts of the Body were tipt with the Bloud of the Lamb, then the Oil was next to be applied to the same Parts. Oil (you know) is of a mollifying and softning Nature; Oil is good to fetch off Rust from Clocks and Jacks, making them to go the more freely and nimbly, which, when clogg'd with Rust, became unserviceable before; comparatively to the nature of Oil in this case, is the Usefulness of Grace held forth in Scripture, *Isa. 1. 6. Thy Sores have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with Ointment.* The meaning is, they had no Grace (which here is compared to Oil) to Sanctifie their ulcerated corrupt Natures, which, like so many Plague-sores, were continually issuing from them; with this Oil of Grace, the cleansed Lepers of Christ were to have their Ears, Hands and great Toes of their right Feet anointed.

From all which, we may observe this Note :

Doct. *That as the Bloud of Christ hath bought us for his Use and Service, so the Oil of his Grace, is that only which can fit us for it, and make us willing to set about it, Psal. 110. 3. In the Day of my Power, thy People shall be a willing People : By Nature every Man is averse to every part of Christ's Work and Service. Rom. 8. 7. The natural-minded Man is Enmity against God ; it is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be. John 5. 40. Ye will not come to me that you might Live. Jer. 44. 16. As for the Word, which thou hast spoken unto us in the Name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee.*

The Ear will not hear the Voice of Christ, *Jer. 11. 10.* the Hand will not Work for Christ, *Jer. 11. 7, 8.* neither will the Feet walk in the Way of Christ, *Psal. 78. 10.* But now, when our High-Priest, Jesus Christ, hath tipt the Ear, the Thumb, and Foot of our Souls, with the Oil of his Grace and Sanctification, then will they be ready for any Work and Service, which he shall employ them in, or call them unto; the Ear which was bought by Christ, is now taught by Christ to hear his Voice, even his Voice in his Word, Works, Ordinances and Providences, against all
which,

which, the Ear was deaf, and shut up before, *Psal. 58. 4.* The Hand which was bought by Christ, is now taught to Work for Christ, *Heb. 13. 21. Working that which is well-pleasing in his sight.* *Isa. 54. 13. All her Children are taught by the Lord.* They are taught to work the Works of Repentance, Faith, Love, Self-denial, Mortification; how to be Praying to God, and Praising of God, Suffering for God, and to Walk with God; Grace teacheth all this, and makes the Heart willing to all this; the Spirit shall teach you all things, saith Christ, *John 14. 26.* Lastly, The Feet, which were bought by Christ, (by this Oil of Grace) are now taught to Walk with Christ, as *Enoch* did; *And Enoch walked with God, Gen. 5. 22.*

And so we come to the Reason of the Point :

The Reason of all this is, because Grace is of a conquering, subduing Nature, and of an enabling Quality; Grace is sent down into the Heart, to subdue the Power and Strength of Sin therein, *Rom. 6. 14. Sin shall not have Dominion over you, for you are not under the Law, but under Grace.* And as Grace subdues and weakens Corruption in the Heart, so it enables, strengthens, and empowers the Heart to act for Christ; it is a holy Oil, that dissolves the corrupt Rust which hath been begotten in it by Sin, and, as it dissolves the Rust, so it mollifies and softens the Heart, and thereby it makes it able and willing to run the Ways of God's Commandments, *Psal. 119. 32. So Isa. 40. 31. They shall renew their Strength, they shall mount up as on Eagles wings, they shall run and not be weary, walk and not be faint.*

Use, This informs us then, what matter of Lamentation it is to consider, That though there be so many thousand of Ears, Hands, and Feet in the World, yet that there should be so few of them employed in the Service of Christ, that as *David* speaks of the Idols of the Nations, *They have Ears, but hear not; Hands, but handle not, and Feet they have, but walk not.* The Reason lieth here, Because they never had their Ears, Hands and Feet, tipt with the Blood and Oil of the Justifying and Sanctifying-grace of Jesus Christ: *They are yet dead in their Sins and Trespasses, Ephes. 2. 1.* and dead things cannot act of themselves; yea, they are not only unable to act for Christ, but through the Enmity of their Na-

Natures, they are wholly averſe to every part of Chriſt's Will and Work: As the Apoſtle ſpeaks, They are reprobate to every good Work and Word; it is not only, they cannot, but the real Truth is, that graceleſs Souls will not act for Chriſt, if they could; let not ſuch deceive themſelves any longer, for if you have no Ears to hear Chriſt's Voice, no Hands to do his Work, nor Feet to Walk in his Paths, you are yet in an unjuſtified and unſanctified State and Condition: But would you have your Ears opened to the Voice of Chriſt, ſo that your Souls might live? Would you have your Hands at Work for Chriſt, working that which is well-pleaſing in his ſight? Would you have your Feet made able and willing to run in God's Commandments? *In the keeping of which, is great Reward, Pſal. 19. 11.* then lay thy Soul in the Ways and Walks of Chriſt, who is the great High-Prieſt; Oh, run to him, ſet thy Soul in his preſence, be in his ſight, thruſt thy ſelf through the Croud and Throng, preſs in upon him, and evermore keep up the *Canaanitiſh* Woman's Cry in his Ears, *Matth. 15. 22.* Lord, thou Son of David, have mercy upon me, for my Soul is grievouſly over-run with a Leproſie; thus, with Jacob, be ever Wreſtling with him, until he hath tipt thy right Ear, Hand, and Foot, with the Bloud and Oil of his Grace.

Queſt. But why was the Prieſt to tip the Leper's right Ear, right Thumb, and Toe of the right Foot, with the Bloud and Oil? Why the right more than the left Ear, Thumb, and Toe?

Anſ. The Reaſon may be this, To ſignifie the difference betwixt the Services that Hypocrites and ſincere Chriſtians do offer to him, and do for him; all the Service that comes to him from Hypocrites, is but left-ear'd, left-handed, and left-footed Service, which is no way pleaſing to him.

Queſt. But when may it be ſaid, that we give unto God this left-ear'd, left-handed, and left-footed Service?

As, firſt, When are we ſaid to bring forth left-ear Service to God?

I anſwer, firſt, When we content our ſelves with the bear Hearing of his Will preached, neglecting the Practice of it; this is the Service of the left Ear; indeed, of ſuch a ſort of Hearers we read in *Ezekiel*, *Ezek. 33. 31.* And they come unto thee as the People cometh, and ſit before thee as my People,

People, and they hear thy Words, but they will not do them; for with their Mouth they shew much Love, but their Hearts goeth after their Covetousness. Not to answer the end of Hearing, which is Obedience, is as bad (if not worse) than not to hear at all, *Jam. 1. 22. But be ye Doers of the Word, and not Hearers only.* We use to say, when Men give little Attention to our Words of Discourse, to them, That they turn the deaf Ear to us; and when we observe not what God speaks to us, then do we give the deaf and left Ear unto him.

2. But when may we be said to give left-handed Service to God?

Ans. First, When we give him only partial Obedience, when we do but a part, and not the whole of his revealed Will; this kind of Service *Saul* and *Jehu* gave to God, which was as unacceptable to God, as it was unprofitable to themselves, as you may read, first, in *King Saul*, *1 Sam. 15. 11. It repenteth me that I have set up Saul, for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my Commandments; and it grieved Samuel, and he cried to the Lord all night.* The Case was this, *King Saul* had a strict Command given to him from the Lord, to destroy the *Amalekites*, not to spare Man, Woman, Child, nor Cattle, *Ver. 3.* It's true that *Saul* destroyed many Men, Women, and Children, and some of the Cattle, but he spared *Agag*, and the best of the Sheep and Oxen, with the Farlings and Lambs, but every thing that was vile and refuse, that he destroyed utterly, *Ver. 9.* Here was Obedience, such as it was, but it was only left-handed Obedience, because it was but partial, and not universal Obedience; and, as *Saul's* Covetousness was the cause of this, so it is Men's unmortified Lusts, which proves the cause of the like partial Obedience in every Man else, *2 Pet. 2. 15. Balaam loved the Wages of Unrighteousness.*

A second Instance, which the Scripture gives us of this left-handed Obedience, is that of *Jehu*, *2 Kings 9. 6, 7, 8, 9.* ver. where you find, that he was anointed King, to destroy the whole House of wicked *Abab*, and all his wicked Idolatry; and, in pursuance of his Commission, he cuts off *Abab's* Family, roots out his Idolatry, overthrows the House of *Baal*, cuts off all his Idolatrous Priests and Worshipers in *Baal's* House; but yet still he must be partial in his Service,

vice,

vice, as *Saul* was in his, being under the power of the like unmortified Luſt, which held him back from doing the whole Will of God preſcribed to him in his Commiſſion, *2 Kings 10. 31. But Jehu took no heed to Walk in the Law of the Lord God of Iſrael with all his Heart, for he departed not from the Sins of Jeroboam, which made Iſrael to Sin.*

Secondly, We may be ſaid to give the Lord left-handed Obedience, when we give him only bodily Service, without the Heart, Will and Affections; and, ſaith *Paul*, this will not profit, *1 Tim. 4. 8.* This kind of Service the *Iſraelites* gave to God in the Wilderneſs, *Pſal. 78. 36, 37.* they flattered God with their Mouths, and dealt deceitfully with him in their Hearts, neither were they ſteadfaſt in his Covenant: Yet how do the moſt of Men take up, and reſt in a little bare out-ſide Work in external Performances, and quiet themſelves with a few Names and empty Titles? So they have a Name to live, and are called Chriſtians, and give unto God a little bodily Exerciſe, they are well contented, when all this is but left-handed Service and no more. Alas! theſe Chriſtian-names and Titles, ſeparated from the power of Godlineſs, they ſignifie no more than a parcel of fine ſweet, ſmelling Flowers deckt about the Body of a dead Corſe, which, though they help to Garniſh the Dead, yet cannot they make a dead Body to live. O truſt not to theſe things, nor reſt in them, becauſe they are no more in the ſight of God, than a dead Body without a Soul is in our ſight, *James 2. 26. For as the Body without the Soul is dead, ſo Faith without Works is dead alſo. For Circumciſion is nothing, and Uncircumciſion is nothing, but the keeping of the Commandments of God, 1 Cor. 7. 19.*

Thirdly, and laſtly, When may we be ſaid to give unto God left-foot Obedience?

I anſwer, firſt, When we walk not ſteadfaſtly with him, when we are ſometimes for him, and ſometimes for *Baal*; ſometimes in his Worſhip, and ſometimes in the contrary, like thoſe ſpoken of in *Zeph. 1.* If you read the fifth Verſe, it's ſaid, There they Worſhipped or Swore by the Lord, and Worſhipped and did Swear by *Malcham*. In the ninth Verſe, it's ſaid, That they leapt on the Threshold, as Men divided in their Thoughts, when they come to enter a Houſe, they put one Foot over the Threshold, with a purpoſe to

go into the House, but then they draw it back again, not knowing whether it be best to enter in: This is the Disease of many Lepers about the Matters of God's Worship, especially when Religion is in danger; they are usually at such times, unresolved what to do, or which way to take, whether it be best to stick (wholy) to the Worship of Christ, or the Worship of *Malcham*; a worldly Interest calls upon them to leap over *Malcham's* Threshold, and so into her Temple; but Conscience, from the Light of Scripture, calls them back again: thus they dance to and fro in their divided Purposes and Resolutions, because they are not able to bring Conscience and Interest to run in one Chancel together; but at length Carnal-prudence steps in and compounds the Difference, by advising Conscience and Interest to divide Cuts betwixt them, to Swear sometimes by *Malcham*, and sometimes by Christ; but however Prudence may Judge of this kind of Work, yet the Word of God doth judge it to be but left-handed Service, *1 Kings 18. 21. If the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal be God, follow him: How long will ye halt betwixt two Opinions?*

2dly, We give unto God left-foot Obedience, when we walk at Random and not by Rule, when we cease making the Scriptures our Guide, and instead thereof, we make the Traditions and Humane Inventions of Men (in the Matters of Faith) our Rule and Guide to walk by, *Matt. 15. 9. In vain do they Worship me, teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men.*

And here I shall acquaint you with five corrupt Rules, which the most of Men propose to themselves, as their Guides to walk by in the Matters of their Faith and Conversation, in opposition to the Word of God, which indeed is the only Rule which all Men ought to Walk by, according to *Isa. 8. 20.*

First of all, Some walk by the rule of Custom, which in *Ephes. 2. 2.* the Apostle calls a walking after the Course of this World; many there are that do think, because the most of Men do do so and so, therefore they may do so, and walk so too without the least scruple; How common is this amongst Men to make this the Rule of their Lives, concluding that they are in a very safe condition, if they go that Way wherein the most do walk? This was the Way which the

Jews choſe as their Rule to walk by, Jer. 44. 16, 17. *As for the Word which thou haſt ſpoken unto us in the Name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee; but we will certainly do whatſoever thing goeth forth of our own Mouth, to burn Incenſe to the Queen of Heaven, as we have done, we, and our Fathers, our Kings, and our Princes, in the Cities of Judah, and in the Streets of Jeruſalem.* But for Men to make the Ways and Walks of the Multitude their Rule and Guide to Walk by, muſt needs be a very unſafe and dangerous Rule; it is to walk after a wicked World, as John ſpeaks, 1 John 5. 19. *The whole World lieth in Wickedneſs.* Chap. 2. Ver. 16. *All that is in the World, the Luſts of the Fleſh, the Luſt of the Eyes, and the Pride of Life, is not of the Father, but is of the World.* Hence is that Exhortation, Exod. 23. 2. *Follow not the Multitude to do evil;* and the reaſon of that Exhortation, is given you in Jer. 10. 3. *For the Cuſtoms of the People are vain.* Now, that you may ſee wherein the Danger lieth of making the Cuſtoms of our Fathers before us, or the Cuſtoms of the Places (wherein we live) a Rule to Walk by, it will appear by theſe Scriptures, Jer. 11. 10, 11. *They are turned back to the Iniquity of their Fore-fathers, which reſuſed to hear my Words, and they went after other Gods to ſerve them: the Houſe of Iſrael, and the Houſe of Judah have broken my Covenant which I made with their Fathers. Therefore, thus ſaith the Lord, Behold, I will bring Evil upon them, which they ſhall not be able to eſcape; though they ſhall cry unto me, I will not hearken unto them.*

2dly, A ſecond unſound Rule which Men chuſe to Walk by, is Antiquity, to do as their Fore-fathers have done before them; this is, and hath been a wonderful prevailing Argument with many of the ignorant Sort in the World: What, ſhall we think our ſelves wiſer than our Fore-fathers? Did not they know how to chuſe the beſt of Ways to walk in themſelves, and to leave behind them, their own as the beſt Examples for us, their Children, to imitate in their Abſence? Shall we think that our Fathers are all loſt; if they are not, then are we ſafe enough? So that let the Way be never ſo wicked, and finfully Provoking to God, and Deſtructive to their own Souls, yet will they not be brought off from their Reſolution, of keeping in their good old Way, by all the Arguments that the wiſeſt of Men ſhall uſe with

them: So powerfully captivating was this Disease upon the Hearts of the Jews in *Jeremiah's* Days, that it bore down the strength of the clearest Convictions that the Prophet could bring to the contrary, *Jer. 44. 17. But we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth of our Mouth, to burn Incense to the Queen of Heaven, and to pour out our Drink-offerings to her, as we have done, we, and our Fathers, our Kings and our Princes.* Here, you see, where an ignorant Willfulness carries the sway, how desperate it makes Men in their Resolutions to adhere to the sinful Customs of their Ancestors, that they will rather adventure to damn their Souls to Eternity, than they will be turned out of the common Road which their Fore-fathers walked in before them.

3dly, Others chuse to Walk by the Rule of Mens Traditions, though it be never so contrary to the Rule of the Scriptures, though it be about the weightiest Matters of God's Worship, though the Rules which Men appoint them to Worship God by, are meerly of Human Invention, and without the least Warrant from Scripture, yet, how conformable are the most of Men to such Rules and Orders? Why, say they, can we do amiss to follow the Wise and Learned of the Land? Do not learned Men know best how to make such Forms of Worship as may be most acceptable to God, and which may be mostly profitable to our selves? But how rotten a Rule this is to Walk by, and how unapproveable in Christ's sight, you may read again in *Matt. 15. 9. But in vain do you Worship me, teaching for Doctrines, the Commandments of Men.* Where a People shall make the Precepts of Men their Rule to walk by, rather than the Word of God (especially in the Matters of divine Worship;) this is to set up Men in the room of Christ, which is no better than Idolatry it self. It is a great Derogation to the Honour of Jesus Christ, as if he wanted Wisdom to know what Rules and Laws to make for the Government of his Churches, but vain Man must supply the Defect with his Human Wisdom, which is a dangerous thing, both to the Law-makers and Law-observers, as our Saviour told the superstitious Pharisees, *Matt. 15. 14. If the Blind lead the Blind, both shall fall into the Ditch.*

4thly,

4thly, Others there are which make their own perverse stubborn Wills, their Rule to walk by, they will do what they will do, they will have their Lusts, they will have their Pleasures, they will fulfil the Desires of the Flesh and of the Mind, let God, his Word, and Ministers say what they will against it: This was the Rule which *Ephraim* made choice of to Walk by, in despite of all the Convictions which the Prophet brought to the contrary, *Hos. 2. 5. For she said, I will go after my Lovers that gave me my Bread, my Water, my Wool, my Flax, my Oil, and my Drink.* The like Wilfulness was found in the Hearts of the Jews against the Will of God, *Jer. 44. 25. Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, saying, Ye and your Wives have both spoken with your Mouths, and have fulfilled it with your Hands, saying, We will surely perform our Vows that we have made, to burn Incense to the Queen of Heaven, and to pour out our Drink-offerings to her; ye will surely accomplish your Vows.* Mark, how the Lord takes notice of their Wilfulness, no less than twice in this Verse, you will fulfil your Vows, and you will accomplish the Promises which you have made to your Idols, you will do it, you are wilfully bent upon it, and, inasmuch, as you are so wilful in your Resolutions, I am resolved to be as wilful on my part in your Destruction, and then it shall be known whose Word shall stand, either mine or yours, ver. 27, 28. Thus you see what a dangerous thing it is for Men to make their Wills their Rule to walk by, especially when we consider how opposite the Will of Man is (by Nature) to the Will and Word of God, *John 5. 40. Ye will not come to me, that ye might have Life.*

5thly, Others again there are, which walk by the Rule of enthusiastical Inspirations, Visions, and pretended Revelations, casting off the written Word of God, which was formerly their Rule and Guide, and now account themselves more happy in walking by these Guides, though this latter Age have abounded with (but) too many of these filthy Dreamers, as *St. Jude* styles them, *Jude, 8. Verse*, yet it is no new thing, but a thing as ancient as the Prophet *Jeremiah's* Days, *Jer. 23. 32. I am against them that Prophesie false Dreams, saith the Lord, and do tell them, and cause my People to Err, by their Lies and by their Lightness, yet I sent them not, nor commanded them, therefore they shall not profit this People at all.*

It

It appears that the Design of these ancient enthusiastical Dreamers, and Pretenders to Divine Revelations, was on purpose to weaken the Authority of the Word of God in the Mouths of the Prophets of the Lord, inasmuch as God doth plead the Efficacy of his Word in opposition to these chaffy Dreams and pretended Revelations, so much cried up by these ancient Deluders, *Jer. 23. 28, 29. The Prophet that hath a Dream, let him tell a Dream; and he that hath my Word, let him speak my Word faithfully. What is the Chaff to the Wheat? Is not my Word like as Fire, saith the Lord, and like a Hammer that breaketh the Rock to pieces?*

It is a very dangerous thing, when Persons, through their slighting of the written Word, shall thereby provoke God to give them over to wander after these satanical Delusions, because (many times) what Ways Men do sinfully chuse to walk in, and deluded Rules to walk by, the same Ways and Rules God will judicially chuse for them, *2 Thess. 2. 10, 11, 12. Because they received not the Truth in the Love of it, that they might be saved; for this Cause, God shall send them strong Delusions, to believe Lies, that they might be damned.* Therefore have we that Rule given us in *Isa. 8. 20. To the Law, and to the Testimony; if any Man speak not according to this Rule, it's because there is no Light in him; and, saith Peter, 2 Epist. 1. 19. But we have a more sure Word of Prophecie whereunto ye do well to take heed, as a Light that shineth in a dark place, until the Day dawn, and the Day-star arise in your Hearts.* Thus you see what the false Rules are, which the most of Men do propound to themselves as their Guides to walk by, which will appear at length to be nothing else but left-footed Obedience, in the Eyes of God and Jesus Christ.

3dly, We give unto God left-footed Service, when we walk not constantly with him, when we are off and on with God, when we play fast and loose with God; some there are, when affrighted by strong Convictions, and grieved by and with sore Afflictions, will then for a fit be Religious, then they will Pray and Read good Books, and frequent the Worship of God, and set about the Practice of religious Duties in their Families; but when the sense of the Conviction is abated, and the smart of their Affliction a little worn off, then, like *Ephraim*, all their Righ-

Righteousness appears like the morning Cloud, and all their Goodness like the early Rain that passeth away: This kind of inconstant Obedience, the *Israelites* gave unto God in the Wilderness, *Psal.* 78. 36, 37. *Nevertheless they flattered him with their Mouth, and lied unto him with their Tongues, for their Hearts were not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his Covenant.* This inconstant Service was never yet acceptable Service with God, nor will it ever be esteemed otherwise than left-footed Service offered unto him.

4thly, When we walk not sincerely with God, then we give him left and not right-footed Service; this was the Service *Amaziah* gave to the Lord, *2 Chron.* 25. 2. *He did that which was right in the sight of God, but not with a perfect Heart.* All the Ways of God (saith *David*) are Mercy and Truth: *Good and upright is the Lord, therefore will he teach Sinners his Ways, Psal.* 25. 8. So that you see there is Truth and Uprightness in the Lord towards us, and he expects to find the same in us towards himself again: Truth is the Nature of God, and he cannot but hate the contrary, where-ever he sees it; let Men clothe themselves with never so much out-side Holiness, yet if Truth and Sincerity be found wanting, all is but glittering Hypocrisie in the Eyes of God, *Rev.* 3. 1. *Thou hast a Name to live, and art dead.* The *Scribes* and *Pharisees* had as much of an outward Holiness upon them as most Men living, but their want of Sincerity, turned all their painted shew of Holiness into perfect Rottenness, in the Eyes of Christ, *Matt.* 23. 27. It's not the Matter of our Services only, which commends us to God, but the Manner of our performing of them: If our Ends and Aims be more for our own Praise, Honour, and Profit, than for the Honour and Glory of God, we shall never hear more of it, unless it be to our Shame and Sorrow: *David* was well instructed in this, therefore prays he that God would make his Heart sound in his Statutes, *Psal.* 119. 80.

Thus you have seen the Reasons why the Priest was to tip, not the left, but the right Ear, right Thumb, and the great Toe of the right Foot, of the Leper, with the Bloud of the Lamb, and Log of Oil; the Bloud to purchase the Leper, for the Work and Service of the Purchaser, and the Oil

Oil of Grace to make him fit for it, and willing to set about it.

Now, Soul, if thou wouldst hear the Voice of Christ in a saving manner ; if thou wouldst hear when he speaks to thy Soul, in his Works, Word, Ordinances and Providences ; if thou wouldst work the Works of Righteousness, as the Work of Repentance before God, Faith in God, Love to God, with the Works of Holiness in his sight, together with the Works of Justice and Mercy towards Men ; and if thou wouldst Walk with God, as *Enoch* did, walking in all the Commandments and Ordinances of God, Blameless and without Rebuke, as did *Zacharias* and *Elizabeth*, then be not satisfied until thou hast gotten thy right Ear, thy right Thumb, and the right Foot of thy Soul, tipt with the Bloud and Oil which drops out of the Palm of the Hand of the High-Priest Jesus Christ, *Who is willing to save to the uttermost, them which come unto God by him*, Heb. 7. 25.

PART VI.

Thus after the Priest had tipt the right Ear, the Thumb of the right Hand, and the great Toe of the right Foot, of the Cleansed Leper, with the Bloud of the Lamb, and the Log of Oil ; then, as in Levit. 14. 16. the Priest was to dip his right Finger in the Oil that is in his left Hand, and sprinkle of the Oil, with his Finger, seven times before the Lord.

THIS number Seven was of a sacred Use amongst the Hebrews, is was used in holy Ministrations, as also in miraculous Operations, 2 Kings 5. 10, 14. and also it had a sound of Perfection in it, as witnessing the Perfection of the Creatures made in six Days before, so that there was no need of any more to be done : See the *Assemblies Annotations* upon the place : So then, by the Priest's sprinkling of the Oil seven times before the Lord, denoted that the Work was perfectly done ; which Action of the Priest teacherh us thus much, (if we consider him as a Type of Christ in the Cleansing of his spiritual Lepers,) That as Jesus Christ hath undertook to go thorow, with the Work of the Elects Justification and Sanctification ; so, by his sprinkling

ling of the Oil seven times before the Lord, (which he did in the Person of the Levitical Priest) it was to assure his Father for his Satisfaction; and to assure his People for their Consolation, that the Work of their Justification and Sanctification, is compleat and perfectly done, according to his last Words, when he suffered upon the Cross, *John 19. 30. then he said, It is finished.*

From whence we may observe this Note of Observation :

Doct. That Jesus Christ, a Believer's High-Priest, hath perfectly finished and compleated the Work of their Justification and Sanctification before the Lord.

The Truth of this Observation is attested both by himself and his Father also : *First, By Christ himself, John 17. 4. I have glorified thee on the Earth ; I have finished the Work which thou gavest me to do.* Now the great Work which the Father gave his Son to do and finish, was the Work of the Justification and Sanctification of the Elect, *Isa. 42. 1, 2, 3. Behold my Servant whom I uphold, my Elect in whom my Soul delighteth ; I have put my Spirit upon him, and he shall bring forth Judgment to the Gentiles.*

2dly, This Truth is also witnessed unto by the Father; as well as by the Son, Isa. 53. 10, 11. He shall prolong his Days, and the Pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his Hands ; he shall see of the Travel of his Soul and be satisfied: That is, the Father shall see his Son's Work finished to his full Contentment.

*Reason.] Now the Reason of the Point is this, Because Christ was God as well as Man, and because he is so, therefore he wanteth no Sufficiency to accomplish whatever he takes in hand, nor never yet did he begin any Work, but he always finish'd it before he left it : He made the Heavens and the Earth, and he did it compleatly ; he made Man upon the Earth, and made a perfect Piece of him ; and when he had finished his whole Work, he beheld it, and it was very good, good for Matter, and good for the Form of it, and the ending of it was a glorious Work, *Psal. 19. 1. hence, saith Moses, Deut. 32. 4. His Work is perfect.* So that this is the Reason that a Believer's Justification and Sanctification is so compleat and perfect, it is because it was carried on by Jesus Christ, who is very God*

as well as very Man, and there is nothing too hard for the Lord.

And so we come to Application :

Use, Let this serve for Comfort to the doubting People of God, who are very apt to be dejected and cast down in their Spirits; their Doubt is not so much, whether Christ were able to finish the Work of Justification and Sanctification for them, that's put beyond Question with them, but their Trouble ariseth from their Darknes as to their Interest in this Justification, and the Littleness (if they have any at all) of the Grace of Sanctification.

First, As to their Darknes about their Interest in this Justification; many there are, because they cannot read the Lines of their Justification upon the Book of their own Consciences, are apt to fear whether it were ever written for them upon the Book of Christ's Records in Heaven.

There be three things, which makes some Christians to doubt about their Interest in their Justification: *1st,* A sight of old Sins upon the Book of their Consciences. *2dly,* A natural Proneness to commit new Sins. *3dly,* A want of Skill to distinguish between the old Reckoning, as it stands upon the Book of God's Accounts, and as it stands upon the Memory and Conscience of the Soul.

First of all, The sight of old Sins, as they stand upon the Book of their Consciences; They think, because the sense of Sin remains upon their Consciences uncanceled, therefore the guilt of Sin must needs remain upon the Book of God above unpardoned.

Ans. But this doth not always follow, but rather the contrary: For where Sin is unpardoned, there the Heart (as to the sense of it) is mostly hardened: Look over all the Justified Men which you can find in Scripture, and you will find, none more under the Conscience of Sin, than those who were truly Pardoned and Justified from their Sins, as *David*, though *Nathan* told him that his Sin was pardoned, yet how did the sense of it bleed in his Conscience, *Psal.* 51. 2, 3. *Wash me thoroughly from my Iniquity, and cleanse me from my Sin; for I acknowledge my Transgressions, and my Sin is ever before me.* The like we find in *Job*, though God himself testified of him, that he was a pardoned Man, one that feared God, and eschewed Evil, yet how did *Job* charge home

home the Guilt of Sin upon his own Conscience, *Job 13. 23. How many are my Iniquities and Sins, make me to know my Transgression and my Sin.* So good Heman, *Psal. 88. 15. I am afflicted and ready to Die; while I suffer thy Terrours, I am Distracted.* So that this should rather be thy Cordial than a Corrosive to thee, that with those good Men, the sense of Sin is made to visit thy Conscience: A sense of Sin is necessary to help on Repentance, Repentance is the Fruit of a justified State, *Rom. 8. 30. Moreover, whom he did Predestinate, them he also Called,* (that is by Repentance) *and whom he Called, them he also Justified.*

Secondly, A second Ground of doubting in Christians about their Justification, ariseth from their Proneness in Nature to commit new Sins: Certainly, saith a doubting Soul, if I were ever Justified from the Guilt of my Sins, I should never be so apt to commit Sin as I do.

Ans. It is one thing to have the guilt of Sin acquitted to the Soul, and another thing to have the filth of Sin removed out of the Soul, the one belongs to Christ's Justifying, and the latter to Christ's Sanctifying Grace; the Act of Christ's Justifying of the Soul is done at once, upon the very Act of the Soul's believing, *Acts 13. 39. By him all that do Believe, are Justified from all things, from which ye could not be Justified by the Law of Moses.* But the Act of Christ's Sanctifying a Soul, is done by degrees, and is a Work of Time; so that a Soul may be fully Justified from all his Sins, and yet the Nature very prone to commit it; Paul had no cause to doubt of his Justification, yet he deeply complains of his readiness and proneness, *Rom. 7. 21. I find a Law in my Members, that when I would do Good, Evil is present with me.*

There is this difference bewixt a Justified and an Unjustified Man's Inclination to Sin; a Justified Man always Sins with Reluctancy, but the other with Allowance; the Justified Man is ever renewing his State by Repentance, *Psal. 51. 1, 2, 3, 4. And the other is adding of Sin to Sin without Repentance.* *Jer. 8. 6. I hearkened and heard, but they spake not aright; no Man repented him of his Wickedness, saying, What have I done? Every one turned to his Course, as the Horse rusheth into the Battle.* Sin is squeezed forth from a Justified Man, but it comes freely without let

or hindrance from the other : Now look into thy Heart, though thy sinful Nature works in thee, yet is it with Regret? Is it with due Repentance? Doth it not come freely from thee? Is it the Evil thou wouldst not do, as *Paul* speaks, and doth it oftentimes make thee to cry out as he did in *Rom. 7. 24. O wretched Man that I am; who shall deliver me from the Body of this Death?* Then doubt not, because thou hast no more reason to question thy Justification than *David, Heman, Paul* or *Peter* had.

The third Ground of a Christian's doubting about his Justified Condition, ariseth from his want of Skill, to distinguish berwixt the old Reckoning, as it stands upon the Book of God's Accounts, and as it stands upon the Book of his own Conscience : It is just with such Christians, as it is with some ignorant Servant, who is sent to a Shop-keeper to buy such and such Commodities ; the Shop-keeper sets it all down in his Shop-book, the next Week the Servant comes and dischargeth the Debt, the Week following, the same Servant comes again for new Commodities, the Shop-keeper books down all again as before ; but as the Shop-keeper is writing down of the new Debt, the Servant looking over his shoulder, espies the Items of the old Reckoning upon the Book, which was discharged before ; this sends the Servant away with a Heart loaded with Grief and Trouble, fearing that the Debt (which he had discharged) will be demanded again. It's true, he saw some strokes crost over the Particulars upon the Book, but being wholly ignorant that the crossing of the Book was a full Discharge of the Debt in Law, this keeps the poor Servant under his Fear and Trouble still. Thus stands the Matter with many a doubting Christian about their Justification, though the Book of Accounts in Heaven be discharged and crost above, with the red strokes of the Bloud of Christ, the Vertue of which dischargeth the whole in Law, *1 John 1. 7. The Bloud of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all Sin.* Yet the Soul being unacquainted with this Mystry, he beholding the Items standing yet upon his own Conscience, thinks that the whole Debt is still to be exacted from him, as if there had never been any Satisfaction made for his Debt at all : But, O doubting Soul! if thou wouldst have Peace in thy Soul, thy Work must
be

be to acquaint thy self with the nature of a Believer's Discharge (as to his Debt) in the Court of Heaven above: Labour, by an Eye of Faith, to see the red Strokes of Christ's Bloud, with which the grand Book above is crost for thee for ever; and then whatever the Items are which stands upon the Book of thy Conscience, yet they can do thee no hurt, because now they signifie nothing against thee in Law, *Rom. 8. 33, 34. Who shall condemn? It is God that Justifies. Who shall lay any thing to the Charge of God's Elect? It is Christ that Died.* So that you plainly see, that God justifieth a Believer upon the account of Christ's Death, the Bloud of whose Death, dischargeth his Debt, and gives such a Satisfaction to the Law of God, that nothing can condemn the Soul for ever; thus you see what these Doubts are, which do darken a Christian's Interest in his Justification; and also the Grounds and Reasons from whence these Doubts and Fears do arise: But here lieth thy Comfort, Christ thy High-Priest hath compleated this Work for thee, though thou canst not apprehend thy Interest in it, by a clear sight of Faith, yet he by one Offering, hath perfected this Work for thee, and that for ever, if thou be truly Sanctified, *Heb. 10. 14.*

2aly, This affords Comfort to Believers, against their Doubts arising from the littleness of their Sanctification: Oh, saith a doubting Soul, who is sensible of the weakness and littleness of his Grace? Oh! if I have any Grace at all, yet it is so little, I fear it will never last long, and so I shall never be able to hold out: Oh! my Faith in God, my Love to God, my Zeal for God, my Sincerity before God, my Patience under Trials, my Self-denial and Holiness is so little, that I fear all my Religion will end in meer Formality, and my Profession conclude in Hypocrisie when all is done.

Ans. Oh! Soul, against all these Fears, thy Duty is to look up to Jesus Christ, who is thy mystical Head, and in him thou shalt see thy Soul compleatly Sanctified as well as compleatly Justified; I do not say, that Christ hath compleated the Work of Sanctification in a Believer's own Person, while in this Life; No, no, while a Believer is in the Body, the Flesh will be lusting against the Spirit, *Gal. 5. 17.* and Believers again through the Spirit do mortifie the Deeds
of

of the Body, *Rom. 8. 13.* which is one special part of Sanctification: And, further, I do not say, that the Spirit in his working of Mortification, doth so kill and subdue Sin in Believers, as that it shall never trouble, grieve or defile them more; No, that Freedom belongs to the perfect State in Heaven; but though Christ hath not perfected this Work in a Believer, yet Christ hath perfected Sanctification in himself for the Believer. Doth not the Apostle say, *1 Cor. 1. 30. But of him, are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption.*

First, It must be acknowledged, that (by Nature) thou art in thy self a Fool, *Luke 24. 25. O Fools, and slow of heart to believe.*

Secondly, It is as true, that thou hast no Righteousness of thy own, *Isa. 64. 6. We are all as an unclean Thing, our Righteousness is as filthy Rags.*

Thirdly, Thou art by Nature a perfect Slave and Vassal to Sin and the Devil, therefore is Christ said to proclaim Liberty to the Captives, even to such as thou art, *Isa. 61. 1.*

Fourthly, And it is as true, that thou art as void of Sanctification, *Ezek. 16. 6. When I passed by thee, I saw thee polluted in thy own Blood.*

But now thou seest that Christ is made over to thee by God the Father, to be Wisdom for thy Foolishness, Righteousness for thy Raggedness, Sanctification for thy Pollutedness, and Redemption for thy Slavery; he is all this in the sight of God for thee, and he looks upon thee, as if thou wert all this in thy self for his Son's sake, unto whom thou art united by Faith. What if thou seekest in thy self but thy right Ear, thy right Thumb, and Toe of thy right Foot ript with the Oil of Sanctification, yet be not discouraged, it is enough that the Perfection of it is in Christ, thy Head, for thee, and in God's Account? This is as well as if it were in thy self and better too, and God accounts it as thine, and imputes it to thee for thy own upon thy believing, and would have thee to reckon it so for thy Comfort and Consolation, *Rem. 6. 11. Likewise reckon ye your selves to be dead indeed unto Sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.* (Mark.) To be Dead unto Sin is a part of the Perfection of our Sanctification.

Object.

Object. But can a Man be Dead unto Sin in this Life?

Anſ. It's true, no Man is ſo himſelf, yet in his Head, Chriſt, he is ſo, therefore would God have a Believer to reckon it, as if he were ſo in himſelf; for ſo much ſeems to me to be manifeſtly handed out to us in *Lev. 14.* about Cleanſing the Leper, if we compare the 14 with the 18 Verſe of that Chapter; for in Ver. 14. there you have our Saviour in the Perſon of the High-Prieſt, (or any other of the levitical Prieſts) Sanctifying of the ſpiritual Leper, which was ſhadowed out in the Perſon of the corporal Leper; and in the 18 Ver. there you have Chriſt in the Perſon of the Prieſt, Sanctifying of himſelf, for the ſpiritual Leper, who Believes in him. Mark the Words, *Ver. 18. And the remnant of the Oil, that is in the Prieſt's Hand, he ſhall pour it out upon the Head of him that is to be Cleanſed.*

But, firſt, let us ſee what light the 14 Ver. will afford us in this Matter, for, in this Verſe, you have Chriſt in the Perſon of the Prieſt, Sanctifying of the believing Leper; and, in that Act, you may ſee that the Work was very imperfectly done, only the Tip or Lap of the right Ear, the Thumb of the right Hand, and the great Toe, and that done too but with the tip of his Finger dipt in Oil, which could not carry home much of the Oil to either part, yet the Prieſt was to ſprinkle the reſt of the Oil, which was upon the top of his Finger, ſeven times before the Lord; which number, amongſt the *Hebrews*, (as we have told you before) was accounted a number of Perfection; the meaning of the ſprinkling ſeven times before the Lord, was as much as to ſay, O Lord, the Work which is done upon the Leper, is perfect Work, it is a Work compleatly done: So that though there be no more than an Ear, Thumb, and Toe of the ſpiritual Leper tipt with the Oil of Grace and Sanctification, yet it being true Grace, therefore the Work is perfect Work, perfect for Parts though not for Degrees: So that, in a ſenſe, as low and little as the Grace and Sanctification ſeems to be in thy Soul, yet it may be ſaid to be Perfect, and that in this double reſpect:

First, With reſpect to the Parts of the Work.

Secondly, With reſpect to the Quality of it.

First, For thy low Measure of Sanctification, as low and little as it ſeems to be, yet it is Perfect with reſpect to the
Parts

Parts of it : A Child which is but a Day old, may be said to be a perfect Man for his Parts, though yet he is not so for Degrees ; for he hath all the Parts and Members of a Man ; the Father that begat him, who far exceeds it for quantity, yet hath he not one Limb more in his Body than the Child hath. So it is as true in this spiritual Case, the strongest Believer under Heaven, who hath made the greatest Improvement of his Grace, hath not one Grace more than the least Saint on Earth. In a word, Christ himself hath not one Grace in him more than the weakest Believer on Earth ; this we grant, That he hath more Grace than the greatest Believer ever had, or all the Saints and Angels in Heaven have, put them all together, for Grace was poured into him without measure ; but for the number of Graces, there are no more in Christ than in the weakest Saint ; for you read in *John* 1. 16. *That of his Fullness we all received, and Grace for Grace.*

Secondly, Sanctification in Believers may be said to be Perfect for the quality of it ; as little as thy Grace in thee seems to be, yet for what there is of it, it is as perfect as is the greatest Measure of Grace in the tallest Saint in the World ; as a spark of Fire is as true Fire for the quality of it, as that is which makes the greatest Blaze ; a drop of Water is as perfect Water as is the whole Ocean or Sea ; a little piece of Gold, though but to the value of Six-pence in Silver, yet, for the quality of it, it is as perfect Gold, as a quantity which amounts to a Talent in weight ; so the least degree of Grace, is as perfect for the quality of it, as where there is the greatest quantity : So that, by this you may perceive, that in this sense, the Work of Sanctification may be said to be Perfect in the weakest Believers, who are therefore counted perfect Men, though otherwise made up of their Failings and great Infirmities, as you read of *Noah*, *Gen.* 6. 9. compared with *Gen.* 9. 21. So *Job* 1. 1. compared with the third Chapter. So *David*, *Acts* 13. 22. compared with *2 Sam.* 12. 7, 8, 9. So *Hezekiah*, *2 Kings* 20. 3. compared with *2 Chron* 32. 25. And in this sense our Saviour is to be understood in *Matt.* 5. 48. *Be ye therefore Perfect, as your heavenly Father is Perfect* ; who means by Perfection in this place, a labouring after Grace in the Sincerity and Reality of it, in opposition to Hypocrisie : So then,

if thy Grace be but true Grace, and thy Sanctification be real and not fained, though it be but as a grain of Mustard-seed, as in *Luke 17. 6.* this declares thee in a Gospel Sense to be a perfect Believer. Thus we have dispatch'd the first Particular, which relates to Christ's Sanctifying the spiritual Leper, which he shadowed out to us in the Person of the Levitical Priest's Cleansing of the corporal Leper.

Secondly, We next come to speak of Christ's Sanctifying of himself for the spiritual cleansed Leper: The Light we have into it, springs out of the 18 Verse, *And the remnant of the Oil that is in the Priest's Hand, he shall pour upon the Head of him that is to be Cleansed.* Suitable to this, is that Passage of our Saviour, *John 17. 19. For their sakes I Sanctifie my self, that they also may be Sanctified through the Truth.* Saith the *Assemblies Annotations* upon it, Christ did it by a voluntary Dedication and Consecration of himself, as an unblemished Sacrifice for his People: But the Scripture further tells us, That Christ's being Sanctified for his People, is meant his receiving a Fulness of Grace for them, that with that Fulness they might be made Gracious also, *John 1. 14, with 16 Ver. The Word was made Flesh, and dwelt amongst us, and we beheld his Glory, as the Glory of the only Begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth, that of his Fulness we might receive, and Grace for Grace.* Now who is it that the Scripture calls the Head of every spiritual cleansed Leper? Is it not Jesus Christ? *1 Cor. 11. 3. The Head of every Man is Christ. Col. 1. 18. And he is the Head of the Body, the Church. Ephes. 5. 23. Even as Christ is the Head of the Church, and he is the Saviour of the Body.*

Now the Oil which was to be applied to the Head of the cleansed Leper, that, was not to be given out in a few Drops with the tip of the Priest's Finger, as it was to the Leper's Ear, Thumb and great Toe, as before, no, but when the Oil comes to be applied unto the Head of him that was to be Cleansed; here it was to be poured out without measure, *And the Remnant of the Oil in the Priest's Hand, he shall pour it upon the Head of him that is to be Cleansed, Ver. 18.* Hence the Scripture, speaking of Christ the Head of his cleansed Lepers, tells you, That he received not the Spirit by Measure, *John 3. 34. And that it pleased the Fa-*

ther, that in him should all Fulness dwell, Col. 1. 19. And that he was full of Grace and Truth, John 1. 14. And he was anointed with the Oil of Gladness above his Fellows, Psal. 45. 7. And that Grace was poured into his Lips, Ver. 2. So that this Fulness of the Oil of Grace, which was poured out upon Christ, the Head of Believers, this dwells in Christ for them upon a double account :

First, That the Fruit of it, which was his Obedience, might be imputed to them for their Justification.

Secondly, That the Grace of it might be imparted to them for their Sanctification, as far as they need it, and he sees good to impart it.

First of all, That Christ's Obedience unto Righteousness (which was the Fruit of his Anointing) might be imputed to Believers for their Justification, Rom. 5. 18. Even so by the Righteousness of one, the Free-gift came upon all Men unto Justification of Life.

Secondly, That it might be imparted unto Believers for their Sanctification, John 1. 16. Of his Fulness, we have all received, and Grace for Grace. Both of these two Benefits Paul sums up together in one Verse, 1 Cor. 1. 30. Who of God is made unto us, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption. And Paul, supposing that the Colossians were invested with these two saving Benefits; now, saith Paul, Ye are Compleat in him, Col. 2. 10.

Thus you see where a Believer's Perfection lieth as to his Sanctification, it lieth and liveth in Christ their Head; hence then, when Satan shall raise Objections against thee, labouring thereby to discourage thy Soul, from the lowness and littleness of thy Sanctification, then reply to him as a Man would do to those who upbraid him with the coarse Clothes which he wears on his Back, he is ready to answer them, O ye Despisers, did you know the rich and costly Rayment which I have at Home, you would never despise me as you do for the Clothes I now wear. So, poor drooping Soul, reply to Satan in like manner, What though the Sanctification which dwells in me, be both low and little, yet I have better Clothes than these laid up in Christ for me: Look not so much upon the Habit which I wear my self, but look upon the glorious Robes of Christ my Head, and behold the rich Clothing he appears in, at the Father's right hand for me; all this is mine, and for my Use, to be put on by me when the fullness of Time is come, for then, Phil. 3. 21. He changes our vile Body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious Body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. This was it which caused the Spouse to hold up Heart and Head above Water, in opposition to all the Discouragements that

that the Malice of Hell could caſt into her about the littleneſs of her Sanctification, *Cant* 1. 5. *Though I am black, yet comely, O ye Daughters of Jeruſalem, as the Tents of Kedar, and the Curtains of Solomon*: That is, though ſhe were black with Affliction and Perſecution, for which the World derided her; and though ſhe were black in her ſelf with Corruption, for which the Devil objected againſt her, yet ſhe ſtill comforted her ſelf with what ſhe was in Chriſt; there ſhe was more comely than the Curtains of Solomon: And the ſame Teſtimony Chriſt gives of all his cleanſed Lepers, *Cant*. 4. 7. *Thou art all Fair, my Love, there is no Spot, in thee*. In a word, as little as that Grace is which ſeems to be in thee, yet the Scripture calls it glorious Grace, *Pſal*. 45. 13. *The King's Daughter is all glorious within, her Clothing is of wrought Gold*.

P A R T VII.

Laſtly, when all the foregoing Particulars were applied to the Leper, in order to his Cleanſing, then was the Leper, by orders from the Prieſt, to ſhave off the Hair of his Head, Beard, and Eye-brows, Levit. 14. 9. becauſe in the Hair of the Head, Beard, and Eye-brows, might much of the Filth and Scurf of the Diſtemper lie, and might prove Hiding-places to the ſame, which might much anticipate and hinder the Cure, and greatly hazard the breaking out of the old Diſtemper upon the Leper again.

THerefore the Leper was to ſhave the Hair wholly off from his Head, Beard, and Eye-brows, *Ver*. 9. the Myſtery of which is to ſhew us what his Duty is, who is Cleanſed from the Guilt and Filth of Sin by Jeſus Chriſt, namely, to endeavour ever afterward, the Mortification of the ſame, which is called the Cutting off or Circumciſing the Fore-ſkin of your Hearts, *Deut*. 30. 6. which the Apoſtle makes to agree with the Work of mortifying the Luſts of the Fleſh, *Col*. 3. 5. *Mortifie, therefore, your Members which are upon the Earth, Fornication, Uncleanneneſs, inordinate Affection, evil Concupiſcence, and Covetouſneſs, which is Idolatry*.

The Words thus opened, afford us this profitable Obſervation :

Doct. That as Jeſus Chriſt in love to the Souls of his People, hath waſhed them in his own Blood from the Guilt of Sin, and by the Oil of his Grace removed the dominion of Sin from them; ſo it is the Duty of every Chriſtian to endeavour ever afterwards, the Mortification of the remains of Sin, in their Hearts and Lives continually.

This is ſo clear a Truth, that nothing ſhines with more bright-

ness in all the Scripture, Rom. 8. 13. *If ye Sin after the Flesh, ye shall Die; but, if through the Spirit, ye mortifie the Deeds of the Body, ye shall Live.* Ephes. 4. 22. *That ye put off, concerning the former Conversation, the Old Man, which is Corrupt, according to the deceitful Lusts.* Col. 3. 5. *Mortifie therefore your Members which are upon the Earth, Fornication, Uncleanness, inordinate Affection, evil Concupiscence, and Covetousness, which is Idolatry.* Tit. 2. 11, 12. *The Grace of God that bringeth Salvation, hath appeared to all Men, teaching them to deny Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, to live Soberly, Righteously and Godly in this present World.*

1st Reason.] The Reason of the Point lieth here, because this was one special Purpose of Christ in satisfying the Law for us, and thereby in reconciling of his Father to us, it was, that Sin might be destroyed in us, Rom. 5. 10. with Rom. 6. 6. *For when we were Enemies, we were reconciled to God by the Death of his Son. Knowing that our Old Man is Crucified with him, that the Body of Sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve Sin.*

2d Reason.] It must be so, because our Lord Jesus Christ designed, and intended, that every one of his Redeemed and Cleansed Lepers, should hold a holy Communion with himself, both in the Life that now is, and in the Life which is to come, John 14. 20, 21. *At that Day ye shall know that I am in the Father, and you in me, and I in you; and he that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him. and I will manifest my self to him.* Tit. 2. 14. *Who gave himself for us, that he might Redeem us from all Iniquity, and Purifie to himself a peculiar People zealous of good Works.* Christ is the Prince of Purity, his Eyes are Eyes of Purity, that cannot look upon Iniquity; his Nature is a Nature of Purity, he is called the *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts, whose Glory filleth the whole Earth*, Isa. 6. 3. therefore he cannot live in an impure Heart, nor have communion with impure Souls that are no way washed from their Iniquities. Surely then this makes it highly the Duty of every Christian, to be *Cleansing of himself from all filthiness of the Flesh and Spirit, and to be perfecting of Holiness in the fear of God.* 2 Cor. 7. 1.

Thus having given you the Reasons of the Point, we next come to the Application of what hath been said upon it:

Use, If this be so, let it serve then for Matter of Examination to every Christian, whether we are of the number of Christ's Cleansed and Healed Lepers? Oh! what a blessed thing would it be, if, upon trial and search, we might appear to be such, not in shew, but in substance, not in appearance only, but in reality also; an *Israelite* in deed and in truth, as *Nathanael* was, in whom was no Guile.

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There be not a few, but would ſain perſwade themſelves that they are the Men in whom the Leproſie is cured, they hope that the Bloud of the Lamb Chriſt hath been applied to the Ear, Thumb, and Toe of their Souls; but let me ask ſuch Men, whether the Pri-ſt's Razor have yet been upon them? Oh! beſthink your ſelves, and remember that thoſe which were healed Lepers were ſhaved Lepers, the Hair of their Heads, Beards, and Eye-brows is all ſhaved off, which were the parts and places in which the Scurf and Filth of the Diſeaſe lay and hid it ſelf before: The ſame is ſpiritually true of thee, if thou art a healed Leper indeed, the Scurf of thy Corruption, which hath lain hid in thy Heart, (as to the Dominion of it) is ſhaved off and removed out of thy Soul: *Rom. 6. 14. Sin ſhall not have Dominion over you.* Chriſt will have clean Work made in thy Heart wherein he begins to Work, *Rev. 21. 5. Behold I make all things new* ſaith Chriſt; and ſo ſaith *Paul*, *2 Cor. 5. 17. If any Man be in Chriſt, he is a new Creature; all old things are done away, and all things become new:* So that there is a univerſal Change made in the whole Man, of every one that are the cleanſed Lepers of Jeſus Chriſt, the Judgment, Will, and Affections are all new, and renewed by the waſhing of Regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghoſt, *Tit. 2. 5.*

Now, Soul, what Shaving-work hath there been upon thy Heart and Life? Reſlect upon thy former Converſation; Haſt thou not been a looſe Liver, a Swearer, a Blaſphemer, an unclean Perſon, a Sabbath-breaker, a Hater of Godlineſs, a wicked Scoffer, and cruel Perſecutor of thoſe which have truly feared God? But is this ſhaved off from thee? Is this filthy Scurf gone, and removed from thy Heart within, and thy Life without? Thou knoweſt that thou haſt been a common Drunkard, an unjuſt Dealer, a known Lye, a wretched Worldling, a greedy covetous Oppreſſor, thy whole Life hath been a prayerleſs Life, an irreligious Life, caſting the Word, Worſhip, and Ordinances of God behind thy Back, ſpending of thy precious Time (which ſhould have been ſpent in the Service of thy God:) Oh! this precious Time which thou canſt never recal more, haſt thou laid out in the ſatiſfying of thy Luſts and ſenſual Appetite: Oh! but hath the Razor of thy High-Prieſt ſhaved all this away, and canſt thou now ſay in the Words of *Paul* to the *Corinthians*, *1 Cor. 6. 11. Such were ſome of you; but ye are Waſhed, but ye are Sanctified, but ye are Juſtified, in the Name of the Lord Jeſus, and by the Spirit of our God.* Be not deceived, there was never a healed Leper came out of Chriſt's Hands, but he was a ſhaved, mortified, and ſanctified Leper, the Bloud, the Oil, and the ſhaving Razor, al-
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ways went together; the Blood to justifie, the Oil to sanctifie, and the Razor to mortifie the Affections and Lusts; Redemption from the Guilt of Sin, is only proved by our Mortification to the love and power of Sin in our Natures: *Rom. 8. 1. There is therefore no Condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the Flesh but after the Spirit.*

(Mark,) There is therefore no Condemnation, [there is Guilt removed, who walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit,] there is the Truth of it proved, the shaving of the Head, Beard, and Eye-brows, were evident Signs what the Man had been, and with whom he had been; they were Signs that the Man had been a Leper, and, secondly, That he had been with the Priest for a Cure, and is now come off healed and cleansed of his Distemper: So; likewise, if thou hast been with Jesus Christ indeed, he hath fixed these visible Signs upon thy Soul, *2 Cor. 5. 17. Thou art come of a new Creature, all old things are done away, and all things are become new in thee; but if the Signs of thy Cleansing be not upon thee, thou hast still cause, with the Leper, Lev. 13. 45. to rent thy Clothes, and to go with thy Head bare, and to put a Covering upon thy Upper-lip, crying out to every one which thou meetest, Unclean, unclean.*

PART VIII.

You having dispatched the first part of our Discourse about the Subject contained in this 14. Chap. of Levit. which is the Leprous Person, wherein you have seen the manner of his Cleansing, with the Particulars which result from it; concluding each particular Part, with suitable Application. Secondly, We next proceed to the Leprous House, about which you have these things observeable,

First, The Malady. 2dly, The Remedy. 3dly, If that failed, then, Lastly, You have the total Ruine and Destruction of the leprous House laid before you: But,

First, As to the Malady, you may observe these things:

First, The Disease it self. 2dly, The Signs of the Disease. 3dly, What the Inhabitant was to do upon the breaking forth of the Disease: And, 4thly, The Reasons of his so doing: And, Lastly, The Application upon the Point: But,

First, Here you have the Disease of the House spoken of in the first place, and that is a Leprosie, which was a contagious Pollution, an unclean Infection, dangerous to the Inhabitants dwelling in it, *Levit. 14. 34. And when ye be come into the Land of Canaan, which I give to you for a Possession, and I put the Plague of Leprosie in a House, of the Land of your Possession.*

Secondly,

Secondly, You have the Signs of the House-leprosie, described by these Notes: as, When it appeared in deep Spots, reddish or greenish in the Walls of the House; and if they were lower than the Wall, (that is, if the Spots were fretted deeper than the Wall,) then was it to be counted a real Leprosie, as Ver. 37 sheweth; which literal or material House, with this Pollution cleaving to it, may fairly figure out those spiritual Houses or Gospel-churches, which our Lord Jesus Christ hath ever had in this World; which while they are in this Life, they are likewise subject to their spiritual Leprosies, Defilement and Pollution, by reason of Sin; and, that this may the better appear, it will be necessary to consider the Resemblance which the Scripture gives betwixt a material House, and a well-constituted Gospel-Church of Jesus Christ: As,

First, In a material House there are the Foundation-stones, so there is the same belonging to the Churches of Christ, 1 Pet. 2. 6.

Secondly, To a material House there belongs the chief Corner-stone, which upholds all the rest of the Building, so there is in the Churches of Christ, Ephes. 2. 20.

Thirdly, In a material House there are rows of Stones laid up upon the Foundation-stones, so it is in the Churches of Christ, Ephes. 2. 20.

Fourthly, In a material House, all the Timber-work which hath been fitted and framed for the Building, is all laid up, and coupled together, so it is with the Churches of Christ, Ephes. 2. 21.

Fifthly, They agree also for Design and Purpose, because the Design of Building a material House, is for a Habitation to live in, so are the Churches of Christ appointed for the like purpose, even to the Habitations for Christ to dwell in, Ephes. 2. 22. with 2 Cor. 6. 16. Thus, as the Scripture gives you the Resemblance betwixt a temporal House, and the Churches of Christ, so also doth it give the same Denomination to Christ's Churches, calling them Houses and Habitations, Heb. 3. 3, 4, 5. *Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his House; but this Man was counted worthy of more Honour than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the House hath more Honour than the House.* So Ver. 6. *But Christ as a Son over his own House, whose House are we, if we hold fast our Confidence, and the rejoycing of the Hope firm unto the end.* Thus you see how the Scripture makes a temporal House and the Churches of Christ to agree, both for Name and Substance.

From all which we shall note these two Observations:

1st Doct. *That the spiritual Houses or Churches of Jesus Christ,*
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are subject to great Defilement and Pollution while in this Life.

2d Doct That the Defilement and Pollution, which the Churches of Christ are subject unto in this Life, is many times very open and visible.

1st Doct. That the spiritual Houses and Churches of Jesus Christ are subject to great Defilement and Pollution while in this Life.

In the prosecution of this first Observation, I shall, *First*, prove the Point. *Secondly*, Give the Reasons of it. And, *Thirdly*, Apply the same by way of Use.

First, For the Proof of it, you will find that this was the Case of Christ's old Testament-church, *Isa.* 1. 4, 5, 6. *Ah! sinful Nation, a People laden with Iniquity, a Seed of evil Doers, Children that are Corrupters; they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the holy One of Israel to Anger, they are gone away backward. Wh should ye be stricken any more? Ye will revolt more and more; the whole Head is sick, and the whole Heart is faint: From the Sole of the Foot, even unto the Head, there is no Soundness in it, but Wounds, and Bruises, and purifying Sores; they have not been closed, neither bound up, nor mollified with Ointment.* The like we read hath happened to Christ's Gospel-churches, we read of an incestuous Defilement, and sacramental Pollution which broke out in the Church of *Corinth*, *1 Cor.* 5. 1. with *1 Cor.* 11. 20, 21, 22. We read of the Defilement of Fornication, which broke forth in the Church of *Pergamos*, yea, and the Pollution of Idolatry too, *Rev.* 2. 14. We read of the Pollution of false Doctrine, which broke forth in the Church of *Thyatira*, *Rev.* 2. 20. And also we read of the Defilement of carnal Security, which hapned to the Church of *Sardis*, *Rev.* 3. 1. and of the Pollution of a luke-warm Spirit, which cleaved to the Church of the *Laodiceans*, *Rev.* 3. 16. Lastly, Do not we likewise read how the Gallatian Church was corrupted and defiled in the Doctrine of it, confounding the Righteousness of Christ by Faith, with their own personal Obedience, *Gal.* 3. 1, 2, 3, 4. with Chap. 4. 21. Thus you see the Point proved by clear Scripture-evidence; and so we come to the Reasons of it:

The first Reason may be taken from the Ministers of the Churches; and, *Secondly*, From the Churches themselves.

But, first of all, The Pollution and Defilement of the Churches of Christ, many times do arise from the sleepy Drowsiness of the Ministers and Guides of the same. We read that a Minister's sleepy Season is the Devil's seeding Season; whiles the Minister snores in his Sleep, then is the Devil's Season to sow his Seed, *Matt.* 13. 25. *But while Men slept, his Enemy came and sowed Tares among the Wheat, and went his way.*

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This was the Unhappineſs of the Church of God in the Prophet's Days, to be given over to the Conduct of an ignorant lazy ſleepy Miniſtry, *Iſa. 56. 10. His Watchmen are Blind, they are all Ignorant, they are all dumb Dogs, they cannot bark, ſleeping, lying down, loving to Slumber; yea, they are greedy Dogs, which can never have enough, and they are Shepherds that cannot underſtand, they all look to their own way, every one for his Gain from his quarter.* Hence it is, that, though we read of ſo much Corruption breaking forth upon the Seven Churches of *Aſia*, yet the Ground and Cauſe of it (in ſome Meaſure) was charged upon the Miniſters of thoſe Churches, which were called the Angels of the ſame; when Miniſters are given up to an idle lazy Life, to be remiſs in nothing more than in and about their Duty to God and the Souls of their People, no wonder if their Hearers do decline and wither, as to the Spirit, Life, and Power of Godlineſs under their Hands. Miniſters are called Phyſicians, and you know when a Phyſician grows careleſs and negligent in his Office towards his Patient, no wonder if the Body of ſuch a Patient abounds with corrupting Humours, and the Malignity of their old Diſtempers returns back upon them again: He that reads the Converſation of *Iſrael's* Paſtors, *Iſa. 56. 10, 11, 12.* need not wonder at *Iſrael's* Corruption, which is expreſt in *Iſa. 1. 4, 5, 6.*

Secondly, A ſecond Ground of the Churches Corruption, ariſeth from the earthly-mindedneſs of their Miniſters; when Miniſters, through Covetouſneſs, ſhall make Merchandize of the Souls of their Hearers, and ſet their everlaſting Happineſs to ſale, to fill their Treasures with worldly Gain, I mean, when they ſhall mind more theſt own worldly Wealth, than their Peoples ſpiritual Health; this opens a Door to let in bad Diſeaſes upon their People, it is a very rare thing to find a Miniſter greedy of the Churches Wealth in worldly things, and the People to grow ſpiritually Wealthy under ſuch a Miniſter.

Thirdly, A third Ground ariſeth from the Debauchery and bad Lives of Miniſters, this excludes the Preſence of God, and his Bleſſing from their Labours, and leaves a Curſe in the room of it; ſuch a Miniſter may Preach until he hath preach'd out his Heart, before he ſhall do any good upon his People, *Jer. 23. 14, 32. I have ſeen alſo in the Prophets of Jeruſalem an horrible thing, they commit Adultery, and walk in Lies, they ſtrengthen alſo the Hands of Evil-doers, that none doth return from his Wickedneſs, they are all unto me as Sodom and the Inhabitants of Gomorrah. Ver. 32. They cauſe my People to err by their Lies and by their Lightneſs, yet I ſent them not, nor commanded them, therefore they ſhall not profit this People at all, ſaith the Lord.*

Fourthly, A fourth Ground ariseth from the Superstitiousness of a Minister; when the blind Zeal of a Minister shall incline him to a greater eagerness to promote the Superstition of the Church, than faithfully to promote the pure Institutions of Christ, woe to that People which lives under the Charge of such a Man, *Matt. 15. 8, 9. Ye Hypocrites, well did Esaias Prophecie of you, saying, This People draweth nigh unto me with their Mouth, and honour me with their Lips, but their Heart is far from me; but in vain they do Worship me, teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men.*

Secondly, The Reasons are also drawn from the Churches themselves, that there is so much Corruption amongst them.

First of all, It ariseth from their Negligence in not exercising of their Faith in the hearing of the Word, *Heb. 4. 2. For unto us the Gospel was preached as well as unto them, but the Word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with Faith in them that heard it.*

Secondly, It ariseth from a People's not receiving the Truth in the Love of it; when a People shall rather hear the Word to please their Fancy, than to feed their Faith, when they shall hear more to get Head-notions, than warm Affections, or to grow in Gifts rather than to grow in Grace, let such beware of that fearful Judgment spoken of in *2 Thess. 2. 10, 11, 12. Because they received not the Love of the Truth that they might be saved; and for this cause, God shall send them strong Delusions, that they should believe a Lie, that they all might be damned who believe not the Truth, but had pleasure in Unrighteousness.*

Mark, There was a receiving of the Truth, but not to a right end, many there are, and but too too many, which are sick of this Disease, (*viz.*) To hear much and read much, to increase their Parts, but not their Piety, to be admired of Men rather than to be approved of God; but when Men from a Spirit of Vain-glory attend the Ministry of the Word, but not aiming at the Glory of God, wonder not if such Mens Knowledge prove at last like the Wilderness-manna to the *Israelites*, when gathered and unlawfully kept, *Exod. 16. 20. It bred Worms, and stank*: So woful have been the Effects of an un sanctifying hearing of the Word upon some Men.

Thirdly, It ariseth from the Peoples Unfruitfulness under the Word which they hear; this was *Israel's Sin*, which greatly increased their Corruption, even the same Means which was sent to soften them, turned to their hardning, through their unfruitfulness under it, *Isa. 5. 1, 2. My Beloved had a Vineyard in a very fruitful Hill, and he looked for Grapes, and it brought forth wild Grapes*: But what was the Issue of this? Read *Isa. 6. 9, 10. Go*

and

and tell this People, bear ye indeed, but understand not, and see ye indeed, but perceive not; make the Heart of this People fat, and their Ears heavy; shut their Eyes lest they should see with their Eyes, and hear with their Ears, and understand with their Hearts, and convert and be healed. Thus having given you the Grounds and Reasons whence it is, that the spiritual Houses of Christ are so subject to their Defilement and Corruption in this Life, we next come to the Application of the Point :

1st Use, This serves then, in the first place, to inform us of the Duty both of the Ministers and Hearers.

First, Of the Ministers, who, under Christ, are the Owners of his spiritual Houses or Churches : Would you know what his Duty was that was the Owner of the Levitical House, when the Plague of Leprosie broke forth in it ? Read Lev. 14. 35. He was to go to the Priest, and tell the Priest, that it seemed to him, that there is as it were a Plague in the House ; so in like manner ought every Pastor or Minister to do, even by Prayer, Fasting and true Humiliation, to acquaint Jesus Christ the great High-Priest, with the leprous Distemper, which is broken forth in his Churches : This is the Advice which the Spirit of God gave the Old Testament-churches, as a means to cure them of their Pollution and Defilement, Joel 2. 16, 17, 18. *Gather the People, sanctifie the Congregation, assemble the Elders, gather the Children and those that suck the Breast; let the Bridegroom go forth of his Chamber, and the Bride out of her Closet; let the Priests and Ministers of the Lord, weep between the Porch and the Altar, and let them say, Spare thy People, O Lord, and give not thy Heritage to reproach; then will the Lord be jealous for his Land, and pity his People.* The same Counsel was given to the New Testament-churches, in order to their healing, when the Plague of Leprosie (at any time) broke out upon them, Rev. 2. 4, 5. *Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first Love; remember from whence thou art fallen and repent.* But, alas, how far are the Guides and Ministers of most of Christ's Churches from acquainting our great High-Priest, by Fasting, Prayer, and Humiliation, with the great Pollution which hath lately broken forth in many of their Congregations? Where can we find one Minister amongst them, that goeth to Christ and says, *It seems to me that there is as it were a Plague begun in my Congregation; yea, so far are some from making an open Discovery of it, that they labour to hide and cover it what they can; like Persons whose Houses are infected with the Plague, endeavour to hide it from the Searchers, to avoid the Affliction of being shut up: How common is it to hear how some Men will palliate*

and lessen the Corruption of their Churches, by making great Corruptions to appear to be little, and those that are of the lesser sort, to be nothing at all; but this is not the way to a Cure, no more than the hiding and keeping secret an Ulcer in the Bowels is the way to save a Man's Life, *Prov. 28. 13. He that confesseth and forsaketh his Sin shall find Mercy, but he that hideth his Iniquity shall not prosper.*

Secondly, We may learn hence, what the Duty of the Hearers and Members of Churches is, as well as what we heard is the Duty of Ministers and Pastors.

First of all, Their Duty is this, (*viz.*) To be earnest with God by Prayer, that he would continue his special Presence of Grace with their Ministers, and give them a double Portion of his Spirit, that the Urim and Thummin might never depart from their Heads and Hearts so long as they live with you. Your Ministers are your Seedsmen, and if they, through their Unfaithfulness or Unskilfulness, should sow Hemlock instead of Wheat, what a sad disappointment would this be to your Souls? Your Ministers are your Watchmen, and if they should fall under the Power of a sleepy Lethargy, how speedily will the Devil sow his Tares amongst you? Your Ministers are your Angels, and if they through a Spirit of Debauchery turn Devils, how soon may your Churches be turned from so many Bethels, into so many Bethavens? Your Ministers have large Opportunities to do you a great deal of Good, or a great deal of Hurt, they may be great Blessings, or great Curses to you, and you may expect them to be to you, as you make them, either with or without your Prayers, *Col. 4. 3, 4. Withal, praying for us, that God would open unto us a door of Utterance, to speak the Mystery of Christ, that I might make it manifest as I ought to speak.*

And so we come to the second Observation:

2d Doct. *That the Defilements and Pollutions, which the Churches of Christ are subject unto, while in this Life, are many times very open and visible.*

In the prosecution of this Note, I shall, first, prove it. 2dly, Give you the Reasons of it. And, 3dly, apply it.

But, First, for the Proof of it, if you look back to the Old Testament-church, how open and visible were the Pollutions and Defilements of it, *Ezek. 24. 7. For her Bloud is in the midst of her, she set it upon the top of a Rock, she poured it out upon the Ground to cover it with the Dust. Hos. 4. 13. They Sacrifice upon the tops of the Mountains, and burn Incense upon the Hills. Zeph. 1. 5. And them that Worship the Host of Heaven upon the House tops.* Now what could be more open and visible, than to commit their Iniquity

niquiry upon high Hills, high Mountains, and House-tops? So the Church of *Rome*, who was once stiled the Beloved of God, and called to be Saints, *Rom. 1. 7.* yet at last how open and publick was the Pollution of that Church, *Rev. 17. 5.* And upon her Forehead was written, *Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots, and Abomination of the Earth.*

And so we come to the Reasons of the Point:

Reasons.] The first is drawn from Satan. The second from God; and, The third from the Churches themselves.

The first Reason is drawn from the Devil, who out of a perfect Enmity to God, and Hatred to his Honour and Glory, labours to drive on the Corruption, by the corrupt Inclinations of the People of God, to the highest pitch what he can: He knows that the Honour of God never suffers so much by the Sin of a profane World, as it doth by the Sin of one of God's Churches in the World; and this is that which makes God so severe with his People, in punishing of them when they offend him with their Transgressions, *Amos 3. 2.* *You only have I known of all the Families of the Earth, therefore will I punish you for your Iniquities.*

Secondly, The Devil doth it in Policy, that he might thereby so much the more stablsh the Hearts of his own Children in their Wickedness; besides he knoweth that it will abundantly stumble weak Christians in their way to *Sion*, hoping thereby to bring them back again into their old Snares.

The second Reason is taken from God himself, who in a way of Judgment to a People, that shall take a liberty to Sin in any one degree, and refusing to be reclaimed, then God gives them up to a greater freedom to Sin, *Hos. 8. 11.* *Because Ephraim hath made many Altars to Sin, therefore Altars shall be unto Ephraim to sin.* So that what Choice Men will make for themselves sinfully, God (sometimes) will make the same Choice for them judicially.

The third Reason is drawn from the Churches themselves, with respect to the unmodifiedness of their Lusts; some there are which have such great swelling Lusts, that if God should suffer them to break out, they would make open as well as woful Work upon the best of Men: You may read how violently the Corruption of *David* run forth, when a little let slip by the Lord, and how visibly and open it shewed it self to the World. So *Peter*, What could be more visible and open, than to Curse and Swear that he knew not his Master? So good *Aaron*, How open was his Sin in making the golden Calf?

And so we come to the Application:

1st Use, Is this so, that many times the Defilement and Pollution of the Churches of Christ are so open and visible, while in this Life? Let it serve then to stir up the Churches and People of God, to labour after a spotless holy Conversation, that they may regain the Honour which God hath so often lost, through the careless walking of the rest of God's professing People: You hear how industrious the Devil is to endeavour the polluting the spiritual Houses of Christ; whilest they are in this World, which ariseth from his Malice and Hatred to his Creator, and that he may harden his Children in their Sins, and damp the Resolutions of weak Christians in Godliness: Oh! how should this stir up the Hearts and Hands of all (that have any Love to Christ) to be pressing on so much the more in the Practice of true Godliness, redeeming the Time because the Days are evil, that the World may see that Christ hath (yet) a few Names in *Sardis*, that do walk with him in white, and have not defiled their Garments as the most have done! Have other Churches their Spots upon them? How should you get your Garments washed in the Blood of the Lamb? Are other Churches publickly Scandalous, Earthly-minded, walking with a proud and haughty Spirit? Oh! how should you labour to regain the lost Honour of Christ again, in labouring after a more heavenly frame of Spirit, in being meek, holy, and humble in the sight of all Men? Oh! that you would consider this, that Jesus Christ was never more wounded in the House of his Friends, than at this Day: Oh! if you have any Love for Christ, labour to heal these Wounds again, by adorning the Doctrine of God and your Saviour, with your holy Conversations: Oh! forget not what a large Portion he hath given you in his Blood, and what a good Inheritance he hath purchased for you by his Blood; let him have the Fruit of it which is a holy Conversation, *John 15. 8.* Herein is my Father glorified, that you bear much Fruit.

2d Use, Have the Houses of Christ been hitherto subject to their Defilements and Pollutions; Learn hence then by Faith and Prayer to hasten on those happy Times, which the Word of Prophecie saith, are yet to come upon the Churches of Christ in this Life, when these spiritual Habitations of his, shall no more be troubled with these leprous Defilements and Pollutions in this World. There is one Prophecie which I shall mention for all the rest, *Psal. 102. 13.* with 16 Ver. *Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion, for the time to favour her, yea the set-time is come: When the Lord shall build up Zion, he will appear in his Glory.* I grant that this Prophecie (partly) had its fulfilling in the Jews Redemption, out of their seventy Years Captivity by *Cyrus*, and in the build-

building of the second Temple by *Nehemiah*: but this was not the utmost extent of the Propheſie, which clearly points to the latter times of the Goſpel-churches; even when as in *Ver. 22* of this *Pſal.* *The People are gathered together, and the Kingdoms to ſerve the Lord.* Which time *John* the Divine, placeth after the great Rent that ſhall be made in *Antichriſt's* Kingdom, *Rev. 11. 13.* and then he tells you in *Ver. 15.* that the Kingdoms of this World, are become the Kingdoms of the Lord and of his Chriſt, and he ſhall Reign for ever and ever; ſo that then, and not till then, may we expect the full Accompliſhment of this Propheſie, in this *102 P. al. Ver. 13, with 16.* Certainly, this muſt needs be a glorious Work, and a very glorious Day, when the Lord ſhall ariſe to build *Zion* himſelf, but although it be ſaid, that God will build *Zion* himſelf, we are not to underſtand it in oppoſition to the uſe of outward Means or humane Inſtruments which God hath formerly uſed in this Work; no, but comparatively, ſuch will the marvelous Preſence of his Glory be, which he will then attend thoſe withal, which he will employ in this Work of building his *Zion*, as if God had never had a Hand in the Work before; which will make the Work exceeding excellent and glorious in four Reſpects; beyond whatever the Churches were adorned with before.

First, For Beauty and Glory, in the Eyes of the World, *Iſa. 54. 11, 12. Oh thou afflicted, and tossed with tempeſt, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy Stones with fair Colours, and lay thy Foundations with Sapphires. I will make thy Windows of Agates, and thy Gates of Carbuncles, and all thy Borders of pleaſant Stones.*

Secondly, This Work of building *Zion* will be marvelous, for Light and Knowledge in Myſteries of Faith, about our Redemption and Juſtification by Jeſus Chriſt, together with thoſe leſſer Points about which the Churches heretofore have been ſo apt to diſagree: *Iſa. 60. 19. The Sun ſhall be no more thy Light by Day, neither for Brightneſs ſhall the Moon give Light unto thee, but the Lord ſhall be unto thee an ever-laſting Light. So Ia. 29. 18. And in that Day ſhall the Deaf hear the Words of the Book, and the Blind ſhall ſee out of Obſcurity, and out of Darkneſs.*

Thirdly, This Work will be as marvelous for Peace and Quietneſs to the Churches, who have enjoyed very little of this in the Ages of the World heretofore; indeed, for a ſpurſt or a ſhort ſpace of time, we have found that the Churches of Chriſt have had ſome ſilence in their heavenly Places for the ſpace of half an Hour, *Rev. 8. 1.* ſome ſhort breathing. ſome little freedom from Perſecution, but their Clouds have ſoon returned upon them again after the Rain: Oh! but when the Lord ſhall ariſe to build

Zion himself, then Violence shall no more be heard in their Land, nor Wasting and Destruction within their Borders, but they shall call their Walls Salvation, and the Gates Praise, *Isa. 60. 18.*

Fourthly, When the Lord shall arise to build Zion, the Work will be firmly and lastingly done; tho' the former Builders were gracious and godly Men, yet how quickly have their Work tumbled down again? *David* and *Solomon*, which builded the Temple and City of Zion at first, and though they were holy and wise Men, yet their Building stood not long after them: And the like we read of, *Nehemiah*, *Ezra*, and *Zerubbabel*, Men of great Wisdom and Integrity, who were Builders of the City and Temple of Zion a second time; but, alas! how soon did the *Romans* demolish their Work again? But when God shall arise to build Zion himself, the Work shall surely stand for ever, as that no *Sanballat* or *Tobiah* shall be able to obstruct it, nor no *Nebuchadnezzar*, or *Roman Titus* shall ever be able to pull down this Work to the World's end. *Isa. 4. 5.* And the Lord will create upon every Dwelling-place of Mount Zion, and upon her Assemblies, a Cloud and a Smoke by Day, and the Shining of a flaming Fire by Night, for upon all the Glory shall be a Defence. Oh, that we could get such a sight of this glorious Work by Faith, as might put us upon the haining of it into the World by Prayer!

Last Use, In the mean time, until this glorious Work comes into the World, let what hath been said about it, serve to make us (who may never live to see this glorious Day) but must yet remain amongst the Churches of Christ so subject (yet) to their Defilements and Pollutions, let the Thoughts of it, make Heaven the more desirable to us. Oh! think often upon the Purity of that new *Jerusalem* which is above, and comfort your selves in the Meditations of the Spotlessness of those heavenly Societies unto which you are a going: Houses that never had the least of a Leprosie found in them, nor the least spot of any Defilement or Pollution to stain them; where you may be sure to find all clean and pure, clean from Sin and Corruption, or the least inclination thereunto, where Hypocrisie and Heresie never was, nor ever enters, where Strife and Contention shall never shew its Face, nor a Backbiter ever appear within the limits of that holy City, which have so troubled and perplexed the Churches of Christ in this Life: Oh! let the Thoughts of these things comfort your Hearts, that it is your Father's good Pleasure to give you a Kingdom.

PART IX.

Thus having dispatch'd what related to the Disease of the House, which was a Leprosie; together with what the Inhabitant in it was to do upon the breaking forth of the Disease, namely, he was to go to the Priest, and say, It seems to me that there is as it were a Plague in the House.

WE next come to the Grounds and Reasons why the Inhabitant of the House was to make such a Discovery of the Plague to the Priest. The Reason was this, (*viz.*) To preserve the things in the House from the like Infection, *Lev. 14. 35.* Then the Priest shall command that they empty the House before the Priest go in to see the Plague, that all that is in the House be not made Unclean. Now if we apply this to the spiritual Houses of Jesus Christ, it will afford us this profitable Observation:

Doct. That it is the Duty of the Churches of Christ, who are sound and healthy in the Faith, (in order to their Preservation) to keep as much at a distance as they can, from such Churches as are corrupted, and will not be healed.

The Truth of this Observation appears both from the Old and New Testament:

*First, From the Old Testament, when the ten Tribes became Corrupt with Idolatry, through their Compliance with Jeroboam's Calves at Dan and Bethel, who had several Prophets of the Lord sent to them, to reduce them to their Obedience again, but would not be reclaimed; upon this Refusal, God sends an Exhortation to the Church of Judah, not to do as Israel had done, Hosea 4. 15. Though Israel play the Harlot, yet let not Judah offend. But to prevent Judah, from being defiled with Israel's Pollution, a thorough Separation is enjoined upon Judah, that their Communion with the ten Tribes might not occasion their Pollution with the same Idolatry, *Hos. 4. 15. with 17 Ver. Come ye not unto Gilgal, neither go ye up to Bethaven; Ephraim is joyned to Idols, let him alone.* I know, that some are of the Opinion, that this 17 Verse is to be applied to the Prophet Hosea, he only was to let Ephraim alone, so as not to Preach or Prophesie to them any more, seeing they would still be a rebellious House; but who ever shall compare Chap. 1. Ver. 9, with the 4 Chap. and the 15, 16, 17 Ver. must needs conclude, that it was Judah's Separation from the ten Idolatrous Tribes, which was principally intended in these Texts.*

Secondly, The like Truth will the New Testament afford us; for if we consider the Church of Rome in its original and first

Plantation, none can deny but that it was a famous Gospel-church of Jesus Christ, and one of the Golden-candlesticks amongst which he delighted to walk; for we read that their Faith was spoken of throughout the World, *Rom. 1. 8.* but withal, you may read, when they became a leprous Church, and would not be healed, are then all the sound People of God required to separate from her, *Rev. 18. 4.* *And I heard another Voice from Heaven, saying, Come out of her my People, that ye be not Partakers of her Sins, and that ye receive not of her Plagues.*

Quest. But what kind of Corruption is it, which will warrant our Separation from any Church in order to our Preservation?

Ans. That most of our Divines do agree in this, that a Churches Corruption in the Doctrine of the Gospel, and will not be reformed; this gives Warrant for our Separation from such a Church. And, that a Separation from such a Church appears to be our Duty, will appear from these Grounds:

First, Because of the Reason which is given in the Case of the Levitical House, *Lev. 14. 36.* *Ye shall empty the House, that all that is in the House be not made Unclean.* But spiritual Pollution is the most dangerous of all, it seizeth the spiritual part, therefore the more to be abandoned; Nature teacheth Men to avoid the Plague, which only endangereth the Body; and ought we not much more to avoid that Plague which doth inevitably endanger our Souls to our eternal Damage? A corporal Leprosie doth only shut out the Diseased from Communion with Men, but a spiritual Leprosie, shuts Men out from Communion with God, *Isa. 59. 2.* *But your Iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your Sins have hid his Face from you, that he will not hear.* God can Love us, Comfort us, and hold Communion with us, under the greatest outward Pollution that can light upon our outward Man; but he can neither Love us, or Delight in us, nor hold the least Fellowship with us, in our allowed Sins.

2d Reason.] Why we ought to separate from corrupt Churches, if unreclaimable, because, otherwise, we make our selves Partakers with them in their evil Deeds, for we ought not to partake with other Mens Sins, *Rev. 18. 4.* *Partake not with her in her Sins.*

3d Reason.] Because if we partake with others in their Sins, we are liable to partake with them in the Punishment which God shall inflict upon them for the same, *Rev. 18. 4.* *Partake not with her in her Sins, lest ye partake of her Plagues.* God hath Plagues for Apostatizing Churches, and Punishments for those that shall joyn with them: Good *Jehoshaphat's* joyning with an Idolatrous *Ahab*, was like to cost him his Life; God will punish the

the Circumcised with the Uncircumcised, if they be both found in one Transgression.

4th Reason.] Why we must separate from unreclaimable corrupted Churches, is, because in so doing we are Witnesses for God against their evil Deeds: You may read, that when the Church of *Rome* became a corrupt Church, first, God gave his reformed People a Call to separate from her, *Rev.* 18. 4. And, secondly, Stirs up his People to be Witnesses against her, *Rev.* 11. 6.

And so we come to the Application:

Use, From all that hath been said upon this Point, let us learn these four Lessons:

1st, Let us learn to be Humble. 2dly, Fruitful. 3dly, Thankful. And, 4thly, Watchful.

First, Let us learn to be Low and Humble in our own Eyes, many of us may have Parts, Gifts and Graces, enough to make us to forget our selves, if the Lord, by a strong Hand upon our Hearts, did not keep us Humble. Oh! remember that all your Advancements are of Free-grace, you have nothing which you can call your own but your Sins, therefore have you nothing of your own to be proud of, or to glory in, unless you will glory in your Shame; your Sins are yours, and your Corruptions are yours, and your inward Thoughts are full of Rottenness, and can you boast of this? And what you have besides this, is none of yours but God's; And will you be proud of that which Free-grace hath bestowed upon you? Doth not the Apostle say, Who is it which makes thee to differ? And what hast thou which thou hast not received? You yet retain the Essentials of a Church, whilest others have lost theirs, and you yet stand when some other Churches are dropt to the Ground, you yet retain the Soundness of the Doctrine of the Gospel, and good Discipline according to the Order of the Gospel is upheld amongst you, when both Doctrine and good Discipline are almost worn to nothing in some other Churches: Oh! be not High-minded, but fear: Oh! remember that you are as liable to fall from your Stedfastness as any Church which hath fallen before you; and you are liable to the worst of Errors and Corruption both in Doctrine and Discipline as well as others, and you stand by Faith, saith the Apostle: Oh! take heed, because you are never nearer Ruine, than when your Gifts, Parts and Priviledges do lift you up, *Luke* 10. 15. And thou *Capernaum*, which art exalted to Heaven, shall be thrust down into Hell.

Secondly, Let it teach us Fruitfulness, because there is nothing which will preserve your standing more than this; not to receive the Truth in the Love of it, is the ready way to

lose it, and to be given up to believe Lies, that you may be Damned, 2 *Theff.* 2. 11, 12. and not to hear the Word mixed with Faith, is the ready way to lose the Faith at last; it's the Barrenness of the Vineyard which makes the Husbandman to throw it open to the wild Beasts, which was the Threatning of God to his *Israel* of old, *Isa.* 5. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 Ver. therefore look to it, that your Hearts and Lives be fruitful; God will not be put off with the fruitless Leaves of an empty outward Profession, *Matt.* 21. 19. When once we let go the Power and Life of Religion, and think to please God with an empty Form of Godliness, he will spew such Churches, or particular Church-members out of his Mouth, *Rev.* 3. 16. Oh! let us labour for a spirit of Zeal and Fervency in all we do for God; let the Heart-searching God, see more of our Sincerity, Faith, and Love to him, in all the Duties of our Obedience which we direct to him, with more of our Self-denial, Meekness, Mercy, Charity and Holiness in our Conversations before him: Oh! account not your selves truly safe, longer than you are answering the ends of your spiritual Privileges; you have had much from God, many choice Ordinances, many a precious Waterings, many rich Gifts and Graces, all which do call for great Fruitfulness: Oh! have a care, that for these golden Dollars, you pay him not off with a few brass Counters again at last.

Thirdly, Let it learn you the Duty of Thankfulness to God, that you are yet a People, bearing his Name upon you, and that you are yet Churches and Houses standing in the Faith of our Lord Jesus; and especially, let us bless God for this, namely, in that he hath made such provision for our Preservation, to keep us from that Corruption which hath so much endangered other Churches, which Provision lieth in that Precept of his, *Rev.* 18. 4. with 2 *Cor.* 6. 16, 18. requiring our Separation from other infected Churches that will not be healed. What a sad condition had the reformed Churches been in, who lived in the Bowels of the *Roman* Apostacy, if they might not have had liberty to separate from them? But, you hear, it was not only their Liberty, but their commanded Duty so to do. You have also seen in the Levitical House, which was a Type of the spiritual Houses of Jesus Christ, the Priest was to command, that the things in the House not infected, should be all brought forth, that they might be preserved from the Leprosie within; which was a merciful Provision to be embraced with Thanksgiving: Oh! therefore, be you truly thankful to God, First, In that you may separate your selves from leprous Churches for your own Preservation. Secondly, Be thankful that it is not your Portion

to be separated from by others for your own Pollution, that the red Cross is not yet fixed upon your Church-doors, to be a Warning to all others to stand off from you: Oh! how doth this call upon all such Churches for Thankfulness to God for his hitherto preserving of you, and to cry out with *David*, Let us take the Cup of Salvation, and give Thanks to thy Name; and see to it, that it be not a Lip-thankfulness only, but a Life-thankfulness principally: Let your Obedience to God, be the Interpreter of his Goodness to your Souls, because he delighteth more in Obedience, than in whole Burnt-offerings, or Sacrifices of the fattest Lambs.

Fourthly, Let this Truth teach us Watchfulness; wakeful Christians are usually the safest Christians, safest from the Errors and Pollutions which secure Christians and Churches are endangered by. The Watchman's sleepy Season, was the Evil Ones seeding Season, *Matt.* 13. 25. the Devil (by whose hand the Churches of Christ are defiled) is a wakeful Enemy, who doth but watch when Christians are secure, then is his time to work and plot their Ruine. *St. Peter* well understood this, therefore gave the Churches this Admonition, *1 Pet.* 5. 8. *Be sober, be vigilant, because your Adversary, the Devil, like a roaring Lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour.* You know in pestilential Seasons, when the Plague is hot in a Town or City, then will Men keep Watch and Ward in those Towns and Cities which are free from the Disease, that they may preserve themselves, because, otherwise, a great deal of Hurt may accrue to such Places in a little space of time: No less Security ought the Churches of Christ to take to preserve themselves, because they live in a World of Danger; the Plague is every-where round about them, in every Heart, in every House, that they have to do with all; the Plague of Hypocrisy, Formality, Pride, Earthly-mindedness, Errour, Idolatry, with all manner of lying Wonders, with strong Delusions of deceivable Unrighteousness, in every Place you can light upon, or enter into; all which calls upon all Christians and Christian churches, to be watchful, and narrowly to look to themselves.

And so we come to the second Ground of Discovery, namely, Why the Inhabitant of the leprous House, was to go to the Priest, and to say, That it seemeth to me, there is as it were a Plague in the House; the Purpose of it was, that the House might be healed, *Lev.* 14. 41. *And he shall cause the House to be scraped within, round about, and they shall pour out the Dust, that they scraped off, without the City, into an unclean place.* Which leads us to the second General, namely, To the Remedy it self, about which we may observe these things:

First,

First, The Healer, or the Person healing, and that was the Priest, *Ver. 36.*

Secondly, We are next to observe, what was to be done by the Priest, in order to the Healing of the leprous House; where, first, he was to scrape off that part of the Wall which was infected.

Secondly, If that would not do, then was he to take out the infected Stones, and to place other Stones in the room of the former, *Ver. 40, 41, 42.* Which leads us to the last thing, (*viz.*) If nothing of all this Means used, will prove healing to the House, then was the Priest to break down the House, the Stones thereof, the Timber thereof, and the Mortar thereof, and carry it out of the City, into an unclean place, *Ver. 45.*

But, first of all, we are to take notice of the Person who was the Healer, and that was the Priest, *Ver. 36. 37.* *The Priest shall go into the House, and shall look on the Plague:* Which Priest in this Work was a Type of Christ, who is our great Gospel High-Priest, whose Office it is to heal his Gospel-houses of their spiritual Leprosies, which they are subject unto whilst in this World.

From whence we may observe this Note:

Doct. That Jesus Christ is the great Healer of all the spiritual Leprosies, Pollutions and Defilements, which happens to his Churches in this Life. Jer. 3. 22. *Return ye back-sliding Children, and I will heal your Back-slidings.* Exod. 15. 26. *I am the Lord that healeth thee.* 2 Chron. 30. 28. *The Lord hearkned to Hezekiah, and healed the People.*

First, He healeth his Churches of the Guilt of Sin, by the sprinkling of his Blood upon them, 1 John 1. 7. *The Blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all Sin.*

Secondly, He healeth them of the Prevalency of Sin, Rom. 6. 14.

Thirdly, He healeth them of the Fruits and Effects of Sin; as, first, he healeth his Churches of their erroneous Doctrine, Prov. 8. 20. *Isa. 42. 16,* with Chap. 29. 24.

Fourthly, He healeth his Churches of their Lukewarmness, *Mal. 4. 2.*

Fifthly, He healeth them of their Barrenness and Unfruitfulness under the Means of Grace, which consists of his Word of Instruction, and Rod of Correction, *Hos. 14. 4, 5, 6 Ver.*

Sixthly, Christ healeth his Churches of their Divisions, and that unhappy contentious Spirit, which the Devil is always kindling amongst them, *Isa. 11. 13.*

Seventhly, Are the Churches of Christ, (sometimes) torn and rent to pieces with Errour and violent Persecution? Christ will

will have his time, when to heal his Churches of all these Rents and Wounds, which they have suffered for his Name and Glory in this World, *Ezek. 34. 16.* In a word, he hath not only Healing in himself for his Churches (who is their Tree of Life for that purpose) but the Leaves which hang about him, brings Health and Healing to the Nations of the Earth, *Rev. 22. 2.* because where-ever he goeth, he carrieth Healing in his Wings, *Mal. 42. 2.*

And so we come to the Application.

1st Use, Is this so, that Jesus Christ is the great Healer of the spiritual Leprosies of his Churches? this serves to inform them, then, where to go, and unto whom to repair, for spiritual Healing, when their spiritual Leprosies do at any time break out upon them. You have seen that it was the Levitical Priest, which was appointed to heal the leprous House under the Old Testament, so it is Jesus Christ our Gospel-Priest, and only him, which is appointed to heal the spiritual Houses of the Lord under the New Testament; and as God the Father appointed him to this Healing Work, so did he fit him with all unspeakable Accomplishments for it, *Isa. 61. 1.* *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good Tydings to the Meek, he hath sent me to bind up the broken Hearted, and to proclaim Liberty to the Captives, and to open the Prison-doors to them that are bound.* And, saith *John*, The Fulness of Grace is in him, *John 1. 16.* not only a fulness of Grace, but a fulness of Grace and Truth too, *Ver. 17.* Certainly we do but run from the Living to the Dead, when we go for a Cure of Church-pollution, to any means (primarily) but Christ in this case: Yet, how common is it to hear some Christians, relieving their dying Hopes under Church-decays and Disorders, in looking to some outward Means for help at this side Christ? Oh, their great Hopes have been, that the King, or such and such a Parliament, Synod, or Convocation would set things in better order, and give us a Cure to all our Church-devisions and Distempers: But, alas! Princes, Parliaments, Synods and Counsels, may pity, but little profit the Churches under their spiritual Maladies; but to cure them, they cannot, because the *Gilead-balm* which should do the Work, they have not with them: *Constantine* the Great, laboured as much to heal the Churches of the *Arian* Heresie, as ever did any Emperour, but he found it a Task for no earthly King to perform: Oh! no, it was only Christ that was appointed and fitted for this Work, it is Christ and not Man, that hath the Honour to be the Repairer of *Zion's Breaches*, and of raising up the decayed Tabernacles of *David*, it's none but he that can close up the Breaches of his

divided People, *Amos 9. 11. At that Day I will raise up the Tabernacle of David that is fallen down, and close up the Breaches thereof, and I will raise up his Ruins. and I will build as in the days of old.* Hence then we need not wonder at so many sick and sore Churches, which we hear and see to be in the World; some almost over-spread with the Leprosie of Superstition; others sick with a proud haughty Spirit, ruling with Rigour over the Consciences of their Brethren; others again, full of the boils and botches of Prophaneness; others blister'd all over with the sores of a contentious and dividing Spirit, the Cause of all this, even from whence these Maladies do arise, lieth here, (*viz.*) These leprous Churches, either labour not for Healing at all, or seek not to the true and right Physician for help; they seek not to Christ, but to Creatures for a Cure, their Help standeth not in the Name of the Lord, but rather in the Name of worldly Powers, in Synods, Convocations and Parliaments, and if their Help and Succour come not in this way to them, they will seek it no where else, or if they do, it shall not be to Christ; But whenever, or where-ever we hope to see such Churches in a better Condition, without the use of better Means then the most have hitherto used (in the neglect of Christ) you may plainly see what the Portion is which such Churches may expect at Christ's Hands, *Jer. 17. 5, 6.*

2d Use, Let what hath been said, perswade the Churches of Christ in general, and every Christian in particular, to give the whole Honour of their spiritual Cure, to Christ alone; have a care of thrusting him out of his Work, by thrusting in of any thing into it, or by employing of any one else about this Work, which is only proper to him: there is no Man ought to take this Honour upon him, but he that is called of God as *Aaron* was, *Aaron* was but a Typical Healer to the Church of the *Jews*; it's true, he was a visible Healer of their Plagues, Pestilence, Sins, and Sufferings which they were subject unto, but still, the principal Healer was Christ, in the Person of *Aaron*: Oh! take not away this Honour from Jesus Christ, either by not making use of him, or by making use of others for help in opposition to him; which is worst of all: For, he will not give his Glory to another, nor his Praise to Graven Images, *Isa. 42. 8.* Christ is the Head of his Church, and who should the Members make use of for Healing if not him? as *Peter* once said, *John 6. 68. Lord, to whom shall we go? for thou hast the Words of eternal Life.* Christ is the good Shepherd, *John 10. 11.* and unto whom should the Sheep repair for Help, but to their Shepherd? Christ is the good Physician, and unto whom should his sick Patients have recourse unto for Health and Healing,

ing, if not to him? In a word, He is that Sun of Righteouſneſs, which carrieth that Healing in his Wings, which makes the feebleſt of his People to grow up as Fat as the Calves of the Stall, *Mal. 4. 2.* Thus having viewed the Healer of the leprous Houſe, which was the Prieſt; we next come to conſider, what was to be done by the Prieſt, in order to the Healing of the Houſe.

Fiſt, He was to ſcrape off that part of the Wall in the Houſe, which was infected with the Leproſie, *Ver. 41. He ſhall cauſe the Houſe to be ſcraped within round about.*

This Action of the Levitical Prieſt, doth lively Type out the Work of Chriſt, who is our Goſpel High-Prieſt, in the cleaning of his Goſpel Spiritual-houſes; we need not doubt, but the levitical Prieſt had his Instruments and other Means, to uſe in the cleaning of the leprous Houſe. So Jeſus Chriſt he hath alſo his Instruments and Means to uſe in the cleaning of his leprous Churches; no doubt but the Levitical Prieſt had his *Levites* to aſſiſt him in ſcraping off the infected Plaiſter of the Houſe; ſo hath Jeſus Chriſt, his Miniſters to work by, in the ſcraping off the Pollution of his Churches: Hence they are called Work-men, *2 Tim. 2. 15.* and Labourers, ſuch as labour in the Word and Doctrine, *1 Tim. 5. 17.* even ſuch by whoſe Labours they preſent Men perfect in Chriſt Jeſus, *Col. 2. 28.*

Secondly, The Means which Chriſt uſeth in cleaning of his Churches, is the Preaching of the Word, with the Power of the Holy-Ghoſt working with it, *John 15. 3. Now are ye clean through the Word, which I have ſpoken unto you.* By this it is, that Chriſt ſcrapes his Churches clean, from that leprous Filth which is apt to cleave unto them; by this it was, which he healed his diſeaſed Church in the Wilderneſs, from thoſe frequent Rebellions which ſo often broke out amongſt them, *Pſal. 107. 20. He ſent his Word and healed them, and delivered them from their Deſtruction.* By this it was which he healed by ſcraping his People in *Babylon*, from that Uncleanneſs, which they went away Foul and Filthy withal from their own Land: He ſent his Word and Prophets to them, to ſcrape them clean of that Deſilement, *Ezek. 3. 11. I ſent thee to them of the Captivity, unto the Children of thy People, and ſpeak unto them, and tell them, thus ſaith the Lord God, Whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear. So Ezek. 36. 33. Thus ſaith the Lord, In the Day that I ſhall have cleanedſed you, from all your Iniquities, I will cauſe you to dwell in the Cities.* And by the ſame Means it was, which our Lord endeavoured to cleanſe the ſeven Churches of *Asia*, as *Ephesus*, from their coldneſs of Love to him, *Perſepolis* of its unſound Doctrine, *Thyatira* of its Neglect in Diſcipline, *Sardis* of its ſpiritual Deadneſs, and *Laodicea* of its Lukewarmneſs,

ness, he sent his Word to them all by his Servant *John*, to cleanse them from their spiritual Leprosies and Pollution, *Rev. 1. 4, 5 Verses.*

Secondly, But if the use of this means will not do, Christ will use other means that shall, and that is Affliction: If the Word will not scrape, the Rod shall rake, until Christ hath fetch'd off the Rust from his People; the Rod, sometimes, effects and brings to pass what the Word doth not; the Word may, and doth shew Men their Duty, but it's the Rod which drives Men to it; many a Man, which hath leapt over the Word, yet at last hath been fetcht back again by the Rod: Afflictions (if sanctified) are as necessary for the People of God, as Physick is for a diseased Body, they are purging Means in order to a healthful Constitution. *David* found much good by his Afflictions, *Psal. 119. 71.* Afflictions makes way for the entrance of the Word into the Affections, which have lain for some Years as lifeless upon the Heart, as Seed upon the Ground that wants Rain. *Joseph's* Brethren, who sinfully sold him into *Egypt*, lay under the unrepented Gilt of that Sin for twenty Years together, until the Rod of Affliction awakened it in their Consciences, *Gen. 42. 21.*

So we come to the Application.

1st Use, This then should teach the Churches of God great Thankfulness to him, who hath made such gracious Provision against their spiritual Maladies, he might have suffered you all to have perished in your Pollutions and Defilements, and have took as great Satisfaction in the glorifying of his Justice in your final Destruction, as in magnifying of the Riches of his Grace and Mercy in your Recovery: Oh! but on the other Hand, what cause have we all to adore the Riches of boundless Grace with a thankful Admiration, that a Fountain of Mercy is found out, and set wide open for the worst of Lepers, and leprous Churches, to Wash in and be Clean? Are you liable to the Leprosie of Pride, Passion, Lukewarmness, Errours, Earthly-mindedness? Doth a Spirit of Discord, Backbiting and Envy break forth amongst you? Lo here is the Word and Ordinances of the Gospel in Place, to scrape and cleanse off all this from you, which if attended with a divine Blessing, it is a quick and powerful Means, sharper than a two-edged Sword, to divide asunder the Joynts and Marrow, the Soul and Spirit, and is a Discerner of the Thoughts of the Heart, *Heb. 4. 12.* And you have heard, if this Means will not do, rather than God will suffer his People to Perish and Rot in their Corruption, he will use his Rod of Correction, to set home his Word of Instruction upon their Souls, which shall smart their Backs, to recover their Hearts, *Isa. 27. 9.* By this therefore the

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Iniquity of Jacob shall be purged, this shall be the Fruit thereof, I will take away their Sin. Oh! therefore all ye that are the Seeds of Jacob, be you thankful to God that he hath given you his Word, and will not suffer you to want his Rod, they being both appointed in his divine Wisdom, as a healing Means against your spiritual Leprosies, whenever they shall break out upon you: How should the thoughts of this abundant Care of God over you, make you to cry out with David, *Psal. 103. 2, 3. O bless the Lord, O my Soul, and all within me forget not his holy Benefits, who forgiveth all thy Iniquities, and healeth all thy Diseases.*

2d Use, Let this Truth serve to perswade, all the cleansed Lepers of Christ, to carry the Matter as they ought to do, towards the means of their Cleansing, which, as you have heard, consists of these two things: *First*, The Word of Instruction. *Secondly*, Of the Rod of Correction.

First of all, See to it, that you carry the Matter well towards the Word of Instruction, so as not to imprison it in your Heads; make not your Heads (as too many do) a Jayl to the Word: there be but too many that will hold the Truth in Unrighteousness, who are unwilling that the Light of the Word, which is got into their Heads, should come down into their Hearts, for fear lest its shining Light should become a perplexing Heat within them; to prevent that, they strive to hold fast the Doors against the Truth, as a Man who fears an Arrest, bolts fast the Doors of his House against the Bailiffs; but if ever you mean to have benefit by the Word, so as to be cleansed from your sinful Leprosies, you must let the Truth out of Prison, and give it a free Passage, that it may be glorified in you: Let it run from Room to Room, from the Head to the Heart, and from the Heart to the Will, and from the Will to the Conscience, and from thence to the Affections, that so it might have an uninterrupted Out-let into the Conversation; so to do, is to carry the Matter as you ought towards the Word of Instruction.

Secondly, Be sure you carry the Matter well towards the Rod of God's Correction; when Afflictions do light upon you, do not fret, repine, nor murmur at them, as if some sore Evil had hapned to you for your Hurt; but rather rejoyce under them, that God by them is about to scrape and cleanse you from that Heart-naughtiness which cleaveth to you; and if the Rod seems to smart, do not say to God as *Jonah* did, *Jonah 4. 9. I do well to be angry to Death*: But rather to say with David, *Psal. 119. 75. In faithfulness hast thou afflicted me.* And instead of muttering at the length or strength of your Affliction, you should reason thus; It seems that our Lusts are strong, and our Corruptions are root-

ed fast in us, which makes our dear Redeemer to put the greater strength into our Afflictions; for, where the Disease in a Body is more malignant than ordinary, there the Ingredients must be the stronger in the Medicine to work it forth again: Christ had rather his People should be preserved in Brine, than rot in Honey; and you may be sure of this, that when Christ by his Rod hath done his Work upon you, then may you expect the removal of it from you, *Isa. 4. 4, 5. When the Lord shall have washed away the Filth of the Daughter of Zion, then will he create upon the Dwelling-places thereof, a Cloud and a Smoke by Day, and the shining of a flaming Fire by Night, and a Glory, with a Defence upon it.*

Thus you have seen what the Priest was to do, in order to the Cleansing of the Levitical leprous House, and how well it shadowed out the Way, Instruments, and Means, which our great Gospel High Priest useth, in Cleansing of his Churches from their spiritual Leprosies and Defilements: We now come to a second Work which the Priest was to do, in order to the preserving of the Levitical House that was infected; his Work was to pull out the infected Stones thereof, and to put other Stones in the room of them, *Lev. 14. 40, with 42 Ver. Then the Priest shall command that they take away the Stones, in which the Plague is, and he shall take other Stones, and put them in the place of those Stones, and he shall take other Mortar and plaister the House.*

Thus you see, if scraping of the Walls, wherein the Infection lay, would not serve the turn, then the infected Stones must be pulled out, and cast away into an unclean Place; which Action, in a most lively manner, leads us to behold the sacred Order which our Lord Jesus Christ observes, in the Cleansing and keeping Clean of his Gospel-churches; who, in like manner, if the Means he hath already used will not do, (as his scraping of them by his Word of Instruction, and the smarring of them with his Rod of Correction,) if nothing of this Means will heal, then out must the Stones be pluckt in which the Infection lay.

Quest. But some may ask, What, or who may we understand by the Stones of Christ's spiritual Houses?

Ans. They are the visible Members of Christ's Churches, *1 Pet. 2. 5. Ye also as lively Stones, are built up a spiritual House, an holy Priest-hood, to offer up spiritual Sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.* So that the Meaning will amount to this, That if any of these Stones shall be so leprous, as that neither the Word nor Rod will procure their Amendment, wherein they walk contrary to sound Doctrine, either in Judgment or Practice, then

then ought they to be separated from the rest of their Brethren, by a Church-excommunication. You see how clear this appears in the Tipe, the infected Stones were to be pulled out of the House, to shew us that the incurable infected Members of Christ's House (which *Peter* calls the Stones thereof) must be pulled out from thence also.

From whence we may observe this Note :

Doct. That when ordinary Means have been used to reclaim offending Church-members, but all to no purpose, then is the Church to cast out such corrupt Members, by an Act of Excommunication.

This is such a necessary Rule to the keeping of the Churches clean, that it is an established Rule by our Saviour himself, *Matt. 18. 15, 16, 17, 18.* *If thy Brother shall trespass against thee, go to him and tell him his Fault, between thee and him alone; and if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy Brother; but if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the Mouth of two or three Witnesses, every Word may be established; and if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it to the Church, but if he shall neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen Man and Pagan.* The meaning is, let him be cast out of the Church, no more to be communed with than a profest Pagan, or the worst of Men, unless he Repents; which act of Excommunication, past upon incurable Offenders, you may read at large in the *Corinthian Church, 1 Cor. 5. 4, 5 Verses.*

And as an Addition to this severe *Corinthian* Excommunication, which was executed upon the Incestuous Person, you may read what a strict Charge the Apostle gives to the Members of this Church, that if a Brother be known amongst them, to be a Fornicator, or Covetous, or a Railer, or an Idolater, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner, not to keep Company with such a Man. Thus you see the Point proved by the Word of God.

And so we come to the Reason of it:

The first Reason is drawn from the Will of God, God will have it to be so: So that a Neglect in the doing of this Work by the Churches, it will be grossly inexcusable on their Part: The Will of God in this Matter, hath been sufficiently revealed to you already, both in the Tipe of the Levitical House under the Old Testament, and by our Saviour's Words under the New, *Matt. 18. 15, 16, 17, 18.* with *1 Cor. 5. 4, 5 Verses.* And it will be esteemed as our Righteousness, (I mean a Righteousness of Sincerity) if we fulfil the Will of God, *Matt. 3. 15.*

Second Reason why the Churches of Christ should cast out incurable leprous Persons from amongst them, is, Because, as by their Sin they have forsaken their God, they thereby have given
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God cause to forsake them; therefore ought the Churches to forsake the Company of such too: The ground of the Churches Union one with another, is that visible Union which they all professedly hold to Jesus Christ, but when in outward Appearance, the Bond of that sacred Relation (which any profess they hold to Christ) ceaseth, then is their visible Union to Christ dissolved by it: Because it was founded and built upon visible Holiness, and when visible Holiness ceaseth, the Union ceaseth also: Therefore whoever they are that oppose the Father and Son, as to their Laws and Government, ought to be opposed by all the Lord's People, *Psal. 139. 21, 22. Do not I hate them that hate thee? am not I grieved at them that rise up against thee? Yea, I hate them with a perfect Hatred, I count them my Enemies.*

Third Reason: It's so because God hath promised his peculiar Presence amongst his Churches, *Matt. 18, 20.* But he will not be in any such Sence with any Church, but upon Terms of their Purity, and that they keep themselves clean Houses to him and for his Company, *Psal. 93. 5. Holiness becometh thine House, O Lord.* Men that return (after a religious Profession made) to their old sinful Course again, are compared to the Sow that was once Washed, to Wallow in their old Mire again, and as a Dog that licks in his old Vomit: And be sure of this, that God will not make his abode with dirty Swine and filthy Dogs: Therefore if the Churches do not proceed to the Casting out of such Swine and Dogs from amongst them, they may expect that God will not continue long amongst them.

Fourth Reason, why Churches ought to Cast out their irrecoverable infected Members, is, Because otherwise, they may be infected, with the same Infection themselves; according to the old Proverb, One scabbed Sheep may spoil a whole Flock: And doth not the Apostle say as much, *1 Cor. 5. 6. Know ye not that a little Leaven, leaveneth the whole Lump? Psal. 106. 35. They were mingled among the Heathen, and learnt their Works.* As one rotten Apple may corrupt a whole Heap, so may one rotten Member corrupt a whole Church, nothing more dangerous than to be Familiar with Men of corrupt Lives and corrupt Principles; for their Words will Eat as doth a Canker, (saith Paul) of whom is *Hymeneus and Philetus, 2 Tim. 2. 17.* If Corah be of a turbulent Spirit himself, and over-run with Pride and Envy, he quickly draweth no less than two hundred and fifty Princes of the Congregation into his Conspiracy, to their utter Ruine, *Numb. 16. 1, 2. with the 35 Verse.*

Fifthly and Lastly, The Reason why the Churches are to cast out their polluted Members, is, That those of them who belong to the

the Election of Grace, may thereby be recovered again, and made the fitter for the Building at last: It is a common Saying, That a Bone once broken, if well set again, is stronger in that part than ever it was before: This is that merciful End which God aims at towards some, (who are habitually living Stones) in and by their Excommunication. To this Purpose it will not be amiss to read the Institution, *1 Cor. 5. 4, 5. In the Name of our Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my Spirit with the Power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such a one unto Satan, for the Destruction of the Flesh, that the Spirit may be saved in the Day of the Lord Jesus.* Mark the words, That the Spirit might be saved in the Day of the Lord Jesus; that is, at the great and last Day, when he shall come in flaming Fire to Judge both Quick and Dead. So that you see, that God cuts off some of his here in this Life, that they may not be cut off from the Life which is to come; he will cast some out of the Church militant, that they may not be cast off from the Church triumphant: God delivers the Soul (by this Ordinance) into the hands of Satan for a time, that thereby he might deliver him from the Power of Satan for ever; though the Means applied be sharp, yet it being blest of God to that end, the Effect you see will be good, gracious and profitable: Oh the depths both of the Riches of the Grace, Wisdom, and Counsel of God, which appears in this thing! How unsearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways past finding out!

Thus having given you the Reasons of the Point, we next come to Apply it:

Use, Let what hath been said upon this Head lead us to a Use of Lamentation; How may we take up the Apostle's Complaint of old, and apply it to our selves, *Phil. 2. 21. For all seek their own, and not the things of Jesus Christ.* So, how few are there which do truly value the Honour of Jesus Christ in this Matter, namely, in labouring to keep the spiritual Houses of our Lord clean and pure? How have we lost that ancient primitive Spirit, in casting out the incestuous Person? Where is that scraping of the Walls, and pulling out the infected Stones of God's Houses, which have their Leprosies visibly upon them? How are our faithful *Jeremiah's* ceased, that would put a difference between the Precious and the Vile? *Jer. 15. 19.* Where are our reforming *Nehemiah's*, who so stoutly refused the *Sanballats*, and *Tobiah's* (Men of unsound Principles) to build the House of God with them? *Neh. 2. 19 20.* Where are our zealous *Pauls*, who are ready to deliver over to Satan the *Hymenaeus* and *Alexanders* that shall dare to Blaspheme? *1 Tim. 1. 20.* How

is the Glory of Reformation gone to the Grave, with these famous Worthies? For want of whose Zeal for the Truth, how are the Vines of God degenerated into wild Fig-trees, and his Trees of Righteousness (in many places) turned into Trees of Rotteness? Have we not cause to run to the Graves and Tombs of those deceased Worthies, *Moses, Samuel, David, Nehemiah, Jeremiah* and *Paul*, with the rest of our Church-reformers, beseeching them all to arise from their Graves again, to put their helpful Hands, to the reforming of our disordered Churches, in the pulling out of the leprous Stones, which have infected the Walls of so many of the Houses of God in our Land, which hath made the Sanctuaries of the Lord both unsafe and unpleasant, for the sounder sort of Christians to abide in them? Oh! if the Graves of the Dead will not hear our bitter Complaints, where shall we go to find out any Healers, that will close up our Wounds, repair our Breaches, and make clean our leprous Houses, that we may with more pleasure and safety inhabit in them? But, alas! how is the Gold of our *Zion's* become dim! How is the most fine Gold changed, and the Stones of the Sanctuary poured out in the top of every Street! Oh! how lamentable is it, that some Churches that were the perfection of Beauty, and the joy of our Land, are now, in many places, so polluted and defiled, that they are become the Objects of Grief and Sorrow to many thousands of sound-hearted Christians; and that which adds to their Grief is, that there is not one *Nehemiah* to be found in a Country, that zealously concerns himself about these things, either to remedy it, or labour to be helpful in it; but instead thereof, the most of Men fall upon the Work of building up the Honour, Dignity, and Wealth of their own Houses. Is this Mens Love to Jesus Christ? Is this their Faithfulness to their Lord and Master? And had they the Houses of God committed to their Care for no other end and purpose, but to let them lye in their leprous Uncleaness, whilst themselves are building their own ceiled Houses, at the costliest and cleanest Rate they can invent and imagine? Will this Work endure the fiery Trial at the great Day of Account?

2d Use, Is for Caution to those, who yet have not joyned themselves to any particular Church: Beware then amongst whom you list your selves for Church-communion, especially where Discipline is openly neglected; be sure of this, that the Leaven of Sin and Wickedness remains a Leaven to be avoided to this day, and the danger of leaping into leprous Houses is as great as ever; and the more refined a Church outwardly seems to be, yet if Wickedness do allowedly lodge

In it, the more dangerous will ſuch a Society be to you: The Church of Rome hath a Golden Cup, but the Poyſon of Aſps was in it; you would account it a high piece of preſumption againſt God, ſhould you adventure to lodge in a Houſe infected with the Plague or Leproſie, when you may be entertained in other Houſes which are free from ſuch Diſeaſes, and are willing to receive you; and will you be leſs careful where to houſe and harbour your Souls? Therefore make your Choice of holy Societies and well-governed Congregations, then may you expect the Bleſſing of God upon you, and his Preſence with you.

P A R T X.

Now we come to the laſt Particular about the Leprous Houſe, namely, That if nothing of the forementioned Means uſed by the Prieſt for the Cure of the Houſe would avail, then was the Houſe to be demolished and levelled with the Ground.

LEVIT. 14. 43, with 45 Verſe, *And if the Plague come again and break out in the Houſe, after that he hath taken away the Stones after that he hath ſcraped the Houſe, and after it is plaſtered, then ſhall he break down the Houſe, the Stones thereof and the Timber thereof, and all the Mortar of the Houſe, and he ſhall carry them forth out of the City into an unclean place.*

This leads us to behold the end of all polluted and impenitent Churches, who wilfully perſiſt in their Impenitency; when they hold faſt their Iniquities and reſuſe to return, as the Prophet ſpeaks, *Jer. 8. 5.* Then the next thing to be done is, they muſt be pulled in pieces and caſt down to the Ground, they ſhall ſtand no longer, the great High Prieſt will root them up, even to the laſt Foundation Stone; what he commanded the Levitical Prieſt to do to the Levitical Leprous Houſe, when no means would heal it, *pull it down to the Ground*, the ſame will he cauſe to be done to his Goſpel polluted Church, which reſuſeth to be healed, *Rev. 18. 21. Thus with violence ſhall Babylon that great City be thrown down.*

From whence we may obſerve this Note for our Information: Doct. *That when no Means uſed will heal and help the Leprous Churches of Chriſt, then will Chriſt unchurch ſuch Churches again.*

In the handling of this Point, I ſhall firſt prove it; 2ly, Shew you what that Infection is which will endanger the unchurching of Chriſt's Churches; 3ly, Give you the Reaſons of it; And 4ly, apply the whole.

Firſt, For the Proof of this Point, you ſee how evident this

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appears from the Type it self, where command was given for the pulling down the Levitical House, when scraping of the Walls nor pulling out of the Stones would avail to the cleansing of it: And this holds as true in the Anti-Type, How severely did God make this good upon his Old Testament House? Behold (saith Christ) I sent unto you wise Men, and Prophets, and Scribes, some of them ye scourged, some ye have persecuted, and killed others of them, *Matth. 23. 34.* The sending of these Prophets, wise Men, and Scribes to them was in order to their Healing, but they would not be healed; then mark what followed hereupon, *Verse 38. Behold your Houses is left unto you desolate.*

So if you consider the seven *Asian Churches*, after they began to be Leprous, *Ephesus, Rev. 2. 4. Pergamos, verses 14, 15. Thyatira, verse 20. Sardis, Chap. 3. 2, 3. and Laodicea, verse 15, 16, 17.* Unto all these Churches was *John the Divine* sent, as a means to heal them, by bringing them to Repentance, but because they received no benefit by it, at length how hath the great High Priest of Heaven and Earth pulled them all to pieces and thrown them flat to the Ground? And what hath he done less to the Church of *Corinth, Galatia, Philippi, Thessalonica*, and the Church of *Rome*, but broke them all down to the Dust, with the Stones thereof, and the Timber thereof, and the Mortar thereof, and hath caused it to be carried out of the City into an unclean place; for what uncleaner place can there be, than to lye in the Dregs of *Mahometism*? which is the condition of most of the Eastern Churches to this day.

Here is one thing more to be observed, That this Levitical Rubbish must be carried without the City, which City was a Type of Christ's reformed Churches on Earth in Gospel-times, for so are the Churches of Christ compar'd, *Psal. 122. 3. Jerusalem is builded as a City compact together*, which sheweth us thus much, That such Churches as are left and forsaken by Jesus Christ, ought to be abandoned by the whole City of God.

What though such Churches (with *Sardis*) may have a Name to live, and may vainly glory in their ancient Title, of being once named a Church of Christ; yet in as much as they have lost the vital Spirit of a Church, in ceasing to hold Union with Christ, the true Head, they thereby forfeit their right of Fellowship to the true Churches of Christ: also, *Hosea 4. 17. Ephraim is joyned to Idols, let him alone.*

Thus you see the Point proved, and so we come to shew you, what kind of Pollution it is, (which if Churches persist in) will endanger their being unchurched again.

First of all, a universal decay in their Love to Christ and one another, so saith *Diodate*, in his Annotations upon *Rev. 2. 4.* Indeed

deed there may be an abatement of Love to Christ, in some particular Persons in a Church, and yet no danger of the whole Churches being unchurched; God is so just and righteous, that he will not lay the Stroke upon the whole Church, when the Guilt is only chargeable upon the lesser number, Ezek. 18. 20. *The Soul that sinneth it shall die.*

But if it be the Sin of the Church in general, to fall back in their Love to Christ and one another, this is a dangerous step to the unchurching of such a Church: Read the threatening of Christ in this case, Rev. 2. 4, 5. *Because thou hast left thy first Love, remember therefore from whence thou art fallen and repent, and do the first Works, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy Candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.*

2. An allowed Spirit of Formality and Lukewarmness, is another Sin which may endanger the unchurching of a Church of Christ; this frame of Spirit is very dangerous, if it be found in a particular Soul; a formal indifferent frame of Heart in a Christian, is not only a bad sign but a bad distemper, it's like the Plague-spots appearing before death, and the distemper is like an Ague in the Body, which proves the foundation (sometimes) of many other mortal Diseases which succeed afterwards.

The like is as true of a prevailing formal lukewarm Spirit in a Christian, it ushers into the Soul several other spiritual Maladies: when Ephraim became like a Cake not turned, Hosea 7. 8. that is, as we use to say, half baked, viz. formal and luke-warm, then suddenly it became proud, idolatrous, treacherous and rebellious against God, Hosea 8. 11. with chap. 9, 10. So that if this evil frame of Heart in a particular Christian, be so detestable to God, how much more displeasing to God, must a whole Society of Christians be, where this evil spirit reigns in the power of it, especially when this Disease in a whole Church is become so malignant, that it expels the Virtue of all good Means that shall be applied for the recovery of it? This greatly endangers the pulling down of such a Church.

Rev. 3. 16. *So then because thou art luke-warm, neither hot nor cold, I will spue thee out of my Mouth.*

3. The third Sin which endangers the unchurching of a Church of Christ, is the sin of professed Idolatry, Ephraim is joyned to Idols, let him alone. Idolatry is a violating of the Marriage-Covenant betwixt a Church and Christ, and a defiling of the Marriage-Bed; which sin in a Wife called for a Bill of Divorce, to divorce the Wife from her Husband, Matth. 5. 32. So that in Scripture, Idolatry also is called Whoredom, Ezek. 16. 20. And it is called playing the Harlot, Jer. 2. 20. Now as the Law allowed a Man to put away his Wife for the sin of Whoredom, so for the sin of Idolatry, which is a spiritual Whoredom, will Jesus Christ put

away a whole Church from him, unless it repents, *Hosea* 1. 6. with 8 and 9th verses.

4. A fourth Sin which helps forward the unchurching of a Church of Christ, is the Looseness and Profaneness of it: this kind of sinning was charged upon the ten Tribes, as the ground of Christ's unchurching of them, and casting them out of his sight, though once a People in Covenant with him, *Hos.* 7. 3, 4, 5. *They make the King glad with their wickedness, and the Princes with their lies, they are all adulterers as an Oven heated by the Baker, who ceaseth from rising after he hath kneaded the Dough, until it be leavened.* So *Vers.* 2. *They consider not in their Hearts, that I remember all their wickedness, now their doings have beset them about, they are before my face: but because of the unreclaimable looseness and profaneness of this Church, Christ at last utterly renounceth them, Hos.* 1. 9. *Then said God, call his name Loammi, for ye are not my People, and I will not be your God.*

The great reason why Christ takes a People into a Covenant-relation with himself, is upon Terms of their Holiness.

Levit 19. 1, 2. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, speak unto all the Congregation of the Children of Israel, and say unto them, ye shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy.*

If ever Christ chuseth any to be his peculiar People, it shall be upon the same Terms which he redeemed them by his Blood, and that was to be a peculiar People to him, zealous of good Works, *Tit.* 2. 14. But then when that visible Holiness ceaseth to be in a Church, which was the ground of that visible Union which was betwixt Christ and them at first, the Union betwixt them is dissolved.

Jer. 7. 9. with the 15th Verse, *Will you steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye know not, and come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my Name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations: So* 15 *vers.* *I will cast you out of my sight, as I cast out all your Brethren, even the whole Seed of Ephraim.*

Thus you see what the Sins are which do so pollute and defile the Churches of Christ, as do greatly endanger their being unchurch'd again: therefore where we find such Pollution reigning in Churches, it's good to avoid them; and so we come to the Reasons of the Point.

The first Reason why Christ will unchurch Leprous Churches, which will not be healed, is, because he will thereby admonish all other Churches, that they may hear and fear, and do no more so wickedly.

Rev. 2. 21, with 23. *I gave her space to repent of her fornication and she repented not, I will kill her Children with death, and all the Churches*

Churches ſhall know that I am he which ſearcheth the Reins and Hearts, and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.

Chriſt's Severity upon ſome Offenders, will make others the more afraid to offend; when the angry Father takes up the offending Child to correct it, this makes the reſt of the Children to quake and tremble.

The ſecond Reason, It is ſo, becauſe Chriſt will perform the Truſt which is repoſed in him by his Father, with relation to the Churches, and that with the greateſt circumſpection: all the Churches of Chriſt in the World, were originally the Fathers, John 17. 6. *Thine they were, and thou gaveſt them to me:* That is, the Father gave them to Chriſt, to be kept, watch'd over, governed and ruled in his Father's Name, as Verſ. 13. ſheweth; and one ſpecial purpoſe why the Father hath entrusted Chriſt with the care of his Churches, is, that God might have fruitful ſervice from them, John 15. 8. *In this is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit.* The Church is God's Vineyard, and Chriſt is made the Vine-dreſſer of it, with this Commiſſion, That if any of the Vines proves ſo rotten, that inſtead of bringing forth of good Fruit, they bring forth nothing but wild Grapes; then muſt he cut down ſuch unfruitful Vines, Iſa. 5. 1, 2. with Verſ 5. *My Beloved hath a Vineyard in a very fruitful Hill, and he looked that it ſhould bring Grapes, and it brought forth wild Grapes; now I will tell you what I will do to my Vineyard, I will take away the Hedge thereof, and it ſhall be eaten up, and I will break down the Wall thereof, and it ſhall be trodden down.*

And this Truſt our Lord Jeſus diſchargeth with a world of Juſtice on each hand; firſt of all, he diſchargeth this Truſt in order to the making of his Vineyard fruitful, Iſa. 27. 2, 3. *In that day ſing ye to her a Vineyard of red Wine; I the Lord do keep it, I will water it every moment, leſt any hurt it; I will keep it night and day.* Secondly, And he is as righteous to fulfil his Commiſſion upon them, if they prove unfruitful, Verſ. 5. of the 26th Chapter, *For he bringeth down them that dwell on high; the lofty City he layeth low, he layeth it low even to the Ground, he bringeth it even to the Duſt:* So that if Churches will not be Trees of Righteouſneſs, Chriſt will ſell them to the Ground for Trees of Rottenneſs; if they will not yield him Fruit for his Father's Table, they muſt be Fuel for his Father's Fire, Luke 3. 9. *Now the Ax is laid to the root of the Tree, every Tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and caſt into the Fire.*

Chriſt is his Father's Servant in this great Work, and the Will of his Father he muſt and will do, both in the preſervation of ſome, or deſtruction of other of his Churches in this Life, according

ing as they prove either fruitful or unfruitful in his sight; for he came not to do his own Will, but the Will of him that sent him, *John 6. 38.*

The third Reason. It must be so, because Christ will manifest to all the World the Righteousness of his Government over his Churches whilst here on Earth. In *Isa. 9. 6.* it's said, that the Government shall be upon his Shoulder, and his Name shall be called the wonderful Counsellor; and as it shall not be said, that so wonderful a Counsellor Rules indiscreetly, so neither shall it be said, that he rules his Churches unrighteously: It is said, that Christ our Lord will order his Kingdom, and establish it with Judgment and Justice for ever; therefore let those Churches which will not be subject to the Government and Discipline of this high Governour, know their doom, *Deut. 32. 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25.* And when the Lord saw it, he abhorred them, because of the provoking of his Sons and of his Daughters; and he said, I will hide my Face from them, I will see what their end shall be, for they are a very froward Generation, Children in whom is no Faith; they have moved me to jealousy with that which is no God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities, and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a People: I will provoke them to anger by a foolish Nation, for a fire is kindled in my anger and shall burn to the lowest Hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and shall set on fire the foundation of the Mountains; I will heap mischief upon them, I will spend my Arrows upon them, they shall be burnt with hunger, and devoured with a burning heat, and with bitter destruction; I will send the teeth of wild Beast upon them, with the poison of Serpents of the dust, the sword without and terror within shall destroy thy young Men, and the Virgin, the Suckling also, with the Man of gray Hairs. This will our Lord do to his polluted Churches, to vindicate his righteousness in the Government which he exerciseth over them.

So that I shall conclude with this hearty Prayer, That God would give you the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation in the knowledge of these things, that so you might have a clear discerning of the fatal Ruine which is like to light upon our Luke-warm Congregations, who have the Leprosie of so much Formality upon them, who with *Sardis* have a Name to live, but are dead, and that you may be of the few Names in *Sardis*, which have not defiled your Garments, and having your Lamps trimmed, your Lights burning, and Garments shining, and so accounted worthy to walk in white with your dear Lord Jesus, both now and for evermore. Amen.

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